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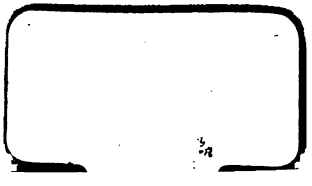
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MEMOIRS

OF

GEORGE WHITEHEAD;

A Minister of the Gospel

IN THE

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS:

BEING THE SUBSTANCE

of the

ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,

And published after his decease, in the Year 1725,

UNDER THE TITLE OF

"His Christian Progress;"

WITH

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING A SELECTION FROM HIS OTHER WORKS.

ALSO

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

30 19

By SAMUEL TUKE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

"If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless."

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Having in those particulars of the domestic history, given by the author, travelled beyond the period of the general narrative; we return to the account which he gives of the sufferings of himself and his friends after the fire of London.

George Whitehead has passed over the interval between 1666 and 1670, nearly without notice. His work is, however, so much of a history of the Society in those eventful times, that it may not be improper to supply a few particulars.

The operation of the act for suppressing conventicles, passed in the year 1664, expired in

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1667; and although the remaining laws under which the Quakers and other dissenters had previously suffered, were sufficient to keep up the practice of persecution, yet they were permitted, during the years 1667 and 1668, to hold their religious meetings with rather less disturbance than heretofore. The extraordinary encouragement also given by the Conventicle Act to wicked informers being withdrawn, those years were comparatively times of ease; and the Society, after all its sufferings, was strengthened and encouraged. Many of its most active members had, during the last few years, witnessed a good confession, and had sealed with their blood the cause in which they were engaged. Others not less able or devoted, arose to fill the places of those who were removed. Amongst those we may mention the names of Robert Barclay and William Penn, the former of whom in 1667, and the latter in 1668, embraced the principles of the despised Quakers; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the honours and treasures of the world.

The distresses of the country from plague, fire, and war, seemed to have had little if any effect, in softening men's minds towards those who differed from them on religious matters, or in promoting even an external show of virtue. Licentiousness and extravagance still pervaded the court; nor did the corruption stop here—

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it pervaded alike the clergy and the representatives of the people. Vice might be said pre-eminently to reign, and it is not surprising therefore that religion and virtue should suffer.

In the year 1670 the *Conventicle Act* was revived in Parliament, and re-enacted with two additional clauses; which were, "that if any justice of peace refuse to do his duty in the execution of this act, he shall forfeit five pounds; and secondly, that all the clauses of this act, shall be construed most largely and beneficially for the suppressing conventicles, and for the justification and encouragement of all persons to be employed in the execution of them."

George Whitehead observes that the avowed object of this act was, "*To prevent and suppress seditious conventicles;*" but the obvious design was, to force a general conformity to the Liturgy and practice of the Church of England. And the agents chiefly employed in the work, were a company of loose, idle, profligate, and mercenary informers; by that law let loose to seek honest people's ruin, by making great havock and spoil upon their goods. And these worthless creatures often boasted to the poor conscientious sufferers, that they were servants to the KING AND THE CHURCH; and that they would make them leave their conventicles, and conform.

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The informers were too often encouraged in their proceedings by persecuting magistrates; and they were much stimulated also by their own desire of gain: being entitled to a third part of the fines on conviction, for which the testimony of two of them, on oath, before one magistrate, was sufficient. George Whitehead justly observes, that "such partial prosecution, conviction, and punishment, against free born Englishmen as this act imposed, were expressly contrary to the great charter, and to the common law and justice of England, and destructive of their properties and birth-right."

Whilst the proceedings of the government, in direct opposition to the king's declaration on his return, could not but excite some feelings of just indignation in the minds of the sufferers; it is quite clear from their history, that they were never led into any political combinations or opposition to the government. Like the early Christians, their only arms were prayers and patience; and their firm stand for liberty of conscience, by meekly enduring whatever the support of it exposed them to, at length obtained what, in all probability, more violent proceedings would have sought in vain.*

* Neale very justly observes, in regard to the new Conventicle Act, that "the wit of man could hardly invent any thing, short

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Whilst the Society of Friends fully evinced their willingness to suffer, rather than violate their consciences, they did not scruple to use legal means to avoid conviction, under the persecuting edict made against them; and to repre-

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of capital punishment, more cruel and inhuman." "It is evident," he says, after repelling the imputation of seditious conduct on the part of the dissenters, "that the act was levelled purely against liberty of conscience, and was so severely executed, that there was hardly a conventicle to be heard of all over England. Great numbers were prosecuted on this act, and many industrious families reduced to poverty.

"The behaviour of the Quakers was very extraordinary, and had something in it that looked like the spirit of martyrdom. They met at the same place and hour as in times of liberty, and when the officers came to seize them none of them would stir; they went altogether to prison; they staid there till they were dismissed; for they would not petition to be set at liberty, nor pay the fines set upon them, nor so much as the prison fees. When they were discharged they went to their meeting-house again as before; and when the doors were shut up by order, they assembled in great numbers in the street before the doors, saying, they would not be ashamed nor afraid to meet together in a peaceable manner to worship God; but in imitation of the prophet Daniel, they would do it more publicly because they were forbid. Some called this obstinacy, others firmness; but by it they carried their point, the government being weary of contending against so much resolution." *History of the Puritans, vol. 2, page* 552.

It was soon after the passing of this act, that the celebrated trial of William Penn and William Mead took place, for meeting for religious worship in Grace-church street, the doors of the meeting-house being closed against them. *Editor.*

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sent the extent and unreasonableness of their sufferings, to the king and the government. This will appear from the following statement, which George Whitehead makes, of the proceedings which took place subsequently to the passing of the last mentioned act for suppressing conventicles.

On the 5th day of the 4th month, 1670, our Friends being met as usual in a peaceable manner, at their meeting-house in Grace-church street, London; and George Whitehead being moved publicly to pray to God, in time of prayer was laid hold on by some of the soldiers, pulled away, and haled out of the meeting; as was also John Bolton, an ancient citizen, for declaring the Truth to the people. They were both had to the Exchange, and there kept six hours; after which, according to order, they appeared at Guild Hall, before Sir Joseph Sheldon, &c. Whereupon George Whitehead called for their accusers, to have them face to face.

Some of the soldiers being called to give evidence, George Whitehead warned them to take heed what they swore; and he also warned Joseph Sheldon, and the rest with him, to do nothing but what they could answer for before the great God, who would judge righteously:

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for, said he, "we apprehend that we are taken contrary to law, even to this present act, viz. by soldiers, where there was no resistance made by any of us; we desire to be heard."

Joseph Sheldon said: "If you be illegally convicted, you may make your appeal:" endeavouring to stop George Whitehead from pleading.

George Whitehead. "I desire to be heard, &c." But being interrupted several times, he said: "I require you in point of justice to hear me, being a free-born Englishman, &c." whereupon they did a little permit him.

George Whitehead. "We would not have you that are our judges, in the mean time to prejudice your own consciences, by an illegal conviction; nor to do any thing but as you will answer the great God; for we have a tenderness to your consciences."

Joseph Sheldon. "Well, we must answer for what we do: take you no care for that," &c.

The witnesses being upon their oaths, one affirmed, that George Whitehead was preaching or teaching when they took him.

Joseph Sheldon commanded the witnesses to be gone or depart.

George Whitehead. "I desire the witnesses may stay till I have answered." But Joseph Sheldon urged them still to depart.

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George Whitehead. "They have absolutely forsworn themselves; for I was not preaching nor teaching when they took me."

A person that stood by the justice said: "You were praying when they took you."

George Whitehead. "Take notice; this man has spoken truth; but the witness has forsworn himself, in saying that I was preaching," &c. Nevertheless the clerk wrote down, George Whitehead an offender; but what judgment was given by the justices against him or John Bolton, they did not hear, either of fine or imprisonment at that time. The Lord was pleased sometimes to touch the consciences, even of some of the magistrates and our adversaries, whereby they were stopped in their proceedings, and prevented from running us to the extreme severity and penalties of the persecuting laws.

On the 26th day of the 4th month, 1670, being the first day of the week, our Friends being again assembled in their meeting place aforesaid, in White-hart court, Sir Samuel Starling, then lord mayor, and some others, having ordered a priest to be there, he read common prayer and preached a sermon in the gallery; seeming to preach up and excite to love, according to these Scriptures of Paul, *Ephes.* v. 2, and iv. 2, 15, &c. The commendation of love, &c. being the priest's chief subject; but contrary

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thereto, in the time of his preaching, the soldiers being present to guard him and disturb us, were rude and abusive to divers of our Friends, for speaking a few words to the priest, to show him how contrary their actions were to his preaching; though he did not rebuke nor stop them from their rudeness and violence to our Friends, women as well as men.

A great concourse of people were present at the meeting; many to attend the priest, and many out of curiosity and novelty, to hear and see what work the priest and his company would make; for it seemed a very strange thing, to see a minister of the Church of England stand up and read common prayer, say or sing their service, and preach in a Quaker's meeting, *deemed an unlawful conventicle*; and therein to preach up love and charity, and at the same time to be attended and guarded with a company of soldiers, to apprehend and persecute the Quakers, for an unlawful meeting or conventicle at the same time and place.

After sermon was ended, George Whitehead stood up and preached the Gospel of peace and love, to show how contrary thereto persecution was, &c. Whereupon the people present were quiet and still, and gave audience; and the meeting was in a peaceable posture for a little time, until two rude fellows, with the soldiers

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following them, violently pulled the said George Whitehead down, and by their force pushed down some women present, and carried him to the mayor's and kept him a while in his yard. His name and some false information against him being carried in to the mayor, he quickly sent out a warrant to commit him to the compter, then in the gatehouse at Bishopsgate, for making a disturbance, &c. until he should find sureties or was delivered by law; and this without first calling in or admitting George Whitehead to be heard in his own defence.

But George Whitehead obtaining a sight of the warrant of commitment, desired to speak with the lord mayor himself, which some of his officers made way for; whereupon George Whitehead told the mayor, that there was a mistake in the warrant, which was that charge against him for making a disturbance, &c. for there was no such thing; he made no disturbance, but contrariwise, quieted the people by seasonable advice and counsel. To which the mayor said, he would examine further into it after evening prayer; but in the mean time sent George Whitehead to the compter at Bishopsgate, and in the evening sent for him again; and then said to George Whitehead: "Your women have disturbed the minister;" asking him further: "Do they not disturb you?" George

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Whitehead answered: "That there was a concourse of people of all sorts, many not being our Friends, who made a noise; but for our women, some did speak something as they might judge it their duty; and probably some thought they might, seeing the priest's hearers did speak; the priest one sentence and they another, that is, in their versicles; and when they cried, Lord have mercy upon us, some of the women did cry, 'Woe to you hypocrites.'"

After other discourse between George Whitehead and the mayor, the constable and another with him were sworn; and all that they could testify was, that he stood up and preached after their minister had ended; but what he preached they could not tell. The mayor said: If the minister had done all, it was a conventicle, and I must fine you twenty pounds. And then after he said, forty pounds.

George Whitehead said: "If I had preached sedition or discord, against either the government or peace of the nation, if that could be made appear against me, I might justly suffer by this law; being entitled, an act to prevent and suppress seditious conventicles. But seeing the witnesses cannot tell what I did preach, I may signify the substance and tendency thereof, viz. a necessity being laid upon me, woe had been unto me if I had not preached the

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Gospel; and it was no other than the Gospel of peace and salvation by Christ Jesus, that I preached; to exalt the power of godliness, directing people thereunto in Christ, that they might not remain under empty and lifeless, or dead forms of professions," &c.

The mayor said: "I believe both you and others do good, or have done good with your acting," &c.

Observation. "See then how evident it is, that what we suffer is for doing good, and not for any sedition or injury."

The mayor said: "Well, I must fine you forty pounds, this being the second offence; you were convicted before Sir Joseph Sheldon once before."

George Whitehead. "Must I suffer for preaching the Gospel of peace, as if I had been preaching sedition? This is strange: doth the law make no difference? Besides, I was not convicted according to this law before justice Sheldon; for it was there made appear, that the witness forswore himself against me, as some there that stood by testified; for he swore that he took me preaching, when many could testify, as some there did affirm, that I was praying, and not at that time preaching.

Mayor. "But were you on your knees with your hat off, when they took you?"

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George Whitehead. "Yea, I was; and the meeting was in a reverent posture of prayer, the men with their hats off; and the soldiers pulled me down when I was praying."

Mayor. "However, you were in a religious exercise," &c.

George Whitehead. "If praying to God must be accounted a religious exercise not allowed by the Liturgy; yet I do not understand that praying is included in that clause, which mentions preaching or teaching, &c. As where it is said: 'That every person who shall take upon him to preach, or teach in any such meeting, assembly, or conventicle, and shall thereof be convicted as aforesaid, shall forfeit for every such first offence, the sum of twenty pounds.' Now here is no praying mentioned; therefore I desire thy judgment, whether preaching or teaching can be meant praying?"

Mayor. "No, praying is not there mentioned; however your conviction is recorded, you may make your appeal."

George Whitehead. "To whom shall I make my appeal, but to those that wrong me?"

Mayor. "I must do according to law; I must fine you forty pounds."

George Whitehead. "Then I must be fined for preaching the Gospel of peace, as if I had been preaching sedition: by this it is all a case,

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to preach sedition or the Gospel of peace. But such a law as makes no difference between preaching sedition, and preaching the Gospel of peace, I must deny as being both against reason and against God. And God who judges righteously, and by whom actions are weighed, will judge between thee and us in this thing."

I do not remember that the fine threatened upon this pretended conviction, was ever levied upon my goods; though divers others were to great excess.

At another time, on a 4th day of the week, I was taken out of a meeting at White-hart court, by an officer abetted by some others, and had before the said Samuel Starling, lord mayor; where information was given against me, that I was taken at such a meeting; and the question being: What did I do there? or, what manner of religious exercise had we? The officer answered: He took me preaching. The mayor would needs have it, that it was a conventicle; and our exercise of religion contrary, or not according to the Liturgy and practice of the Church of England. I answered: "The witness does not prove that." He questioned if the Liturgy or common prayer was read among us at that meeting? I told him, "he should not proceed against me beyond his evidence: what says the witness? we are not bound to accuse

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ourselves: the witness does not say any such thing, as that we exercised religion contrary to the Liturgy; neither does he evidence that we had not the Liturgy read among us; he can only say, he came into the meeting when I was preaching and took me preaching; but does not know what I preached: so that he came into the meeting in sermon time, and the Liturgy or common prayer used not to be read in sermon time." This allegation I used to him, because he deemed our meeting a conventicle, and unlawful if the common prayer was not read in it; and therefore I urged the evidence he had, which did not prove the matter of fact against me, or any of us who were at the said meeting; so that he could not reasonably proceed against us upon the evidence given; yet I told him our manner of religious exercise was well known.

I had some religious discourse with the said lord mayor at some certain times, and endeavoured to possess him with better principles than those of persecution, &c.; he being something of a professor of religion, and sometimes touched with Truth, carried it more fairly toward me than some other persecutors did, and I had some fairer quarter from him than from some other magistrates; he was not one of the worst of persecutors in those days, though

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sometimes too much concerned with others in that unchristian work of persecution.

On the 17th day of the 5th month, 1670, being the first day of the week, Friends were kept without doors in the street, near their meeting house, at Peel in St John's street, by the rude soldiers and a constable; and when two women spake a few words of truth and soberness, the soldiers came and violently pulled them away; and as they came to take them, some were so violent that they pushed divers, both men and women, with their muskets, and tore part of Mary Wicks's clothes and pinched her, bruising some of the men Friends with their muskets; whereupon one Friend cried out to the constable, to keep the peace.

George Whitehead, near the latter end of the meeting, being moved in much tenderness and brokenness of spirit to call upon the Lord in prayer, the soldiers came rudely, and violently pulled him away into the entry among them. He told them of their wickedness and incivility toward the women, and how below both soldiers and the spirit of men they acted, in abusing both peaceable men and women as they had done. Presently after they pulled into their centry or guard, John Scott and Samuel Richardson, and these three they detained in their custody near three hours; and then a

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great company of soldiers guarded them into an ale house near Clerkenwell, where two justices were, viz. justice Foster and justice Boules, with a great company of the king's horsemen or guard before the door.

George Whitehead and his Friends were brought to the door, he called out for justice, saying: "I am glad we are come before the civil magistrates; we desire justice of you against the soldiers, who have kept us out of our meeting in the street, and taken us contrary to law, even contrary to the present act of Parliament; which requires not them to meddle with meetings, unless where resistance is made, and upon certificate thereof, as the act mentions."

George Whitehead several times called for justice, as they would answer to the great God of heaven and earth, who will judge righteously between us. The justice said: "You shall have justice." Whereupon a major on horseback said to the justice: "Sir, he will preach till night if you will hear him."

The justice bowed with his hat off to the major, and showed him great reverence and readiness to convict the prisoners. The major and captain with others alighted, and came in to see the two justices do their work against the prisoners; and the red coats were called, and many of them came in to bear witness against

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us; but George Whitehead excepted against them as unlawful witnesses. Howbeit, contrary to law and equity, they were put upon their oaths to witness against the prisoners; the justices not at all cautioning them to take heed what they swore; but the major did. What they informed against George Whitehead upon oath was, that there were about three hundred persons met in the street; and that they took him *preaching*, standing on a bulk or stall.

George Whitehead answered: "That is not true; I was *praying* standing on the ground, but leaning on a stall."

Soldiers. "We took him praying, but leaning on a bulk."

George Whitehead. "See how confused and contradictory they are in their evidence, for preaching and praying are two things; neither is praying mentioned in that clause of the act, that is made against such as take upon them to preach or teach."

Justice Foster. "You conjured them together to the meeting."

George Whitehead. "That is not true; for they were gathered together before I came to the meeting."

Major. "He does as much as tell the justice he lies."

George Whitehead. "I do not tell him he

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lies; but I say again, it is false that I conjured the people together." The major reproved the soldiers for going beyond his order, in going out into the street to take our Friends; saying: "I gave you order only to keep them out in the street, and you to keep centry at the door."

Justice Boules. "Sir, but after you were gone, I ordered them to take those that preached, and I thank them," &c.

Justice Foster. "What a devil did you come there to pray for?"

George Whitehead. "Do these words become a magistrate? We did not meet to hear or sing ballads in the street, nor do we meet at play-houses, nor at drinking houses, to be drunk where the devil is served; but singly to serve and worship the living God, for which we suffer.

"I accuse none; but tell you what meetings we do not come at nor own, and for what end we do meet," &c.

The information the soldiers gave against John Scott was, that they took him preaching; which was, because when they came with violence he desired them to be moderate; and what crime did he thereby commit?

Their information against Samuel Richardson was, that he laid violent hands upon one of their muskets; but this was utterly false, and

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denied by Samuel Richardson; for he was standing peaceably, as he said, with his hands in his pocket in the meeting.

Then the justices seeming to incline to convict the prisoners upon the act against conventicles, George Whitehead had a few words with them about it, pleading to prevent their severity. But justice Foster urging to have them convicted, two warrants were made, and the said George Whitehead, John Scott, and Samuel Richardson were had to New-prison by the constable and soldiers; the troopers all the time of their examination standing before the door where they were.

It was observable, in their mittimus they missed setting down George Whitehead's name; and instead thereof set down Arthur Cotten, who was a soldier that helped to take them.

The next day after the commitment, the two justices aforesaid came to the prison; and when they had called George Whitehead into the room to them, they asked him his name and place, which he answered; and then they spoke to this purpose, that they had several laws which they could proceed upon against him, and particularly the statute of Oxford, the oath, &c.

The clerk having the oath of allegiance in

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his hand, written with blanks left for the names, and a law book before them.

George Whitehead answered: "I desire you would not go about to ensnare us, for the law was not made to make men transgressors, but to punish them where it finds such. We were apprehended and accused as breakers of the late act against conventicles; let us first be tried upon that act, and cleared, and not have new snares laid for us."

Justice Foster. "We will not lay snares for you; if you will pay your twenty pounds you shall be discharged."

George Whitehead answered something about the said act, as not justly chargeable thereby; but they quickly caused him to withdraw, and called in John Scott, who had a long discourse with them; they accusing him for being an old soldier, and proffered him the oath according to the Oxford act, made against nonconformist ministers, &c.; which he refusing to take, they threatened to detain him in prison six months. After which they again called in George Whitehead and Samuel Richardson, and asked George Whitehead if he would pay his twenty pounds? and if he would promise to come no more at the meeting at Peel?

George Whitehead answered: "I cannot pay any fine for praying to God, or worshiping

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Him; and as for promising to come no more there, I am not my own, I stand in the will of God; neither can I promise any such thing, as to forbear coming to worship or pray to God."

One of them asked Samuel Richardson: "Will you promise to come no more at meeting."

Samuel Richardson. "I can promise no such thing."

So they having fined George Whitehead twenty pounds, as they said, but it was not levied, and Samuel Richardson five shillings, they discharged them. But detained John Scott in prison six months, on the Oxford act supposed; though he was no nonconformist minister nor pretending to holy orders; and then what great crime had they against him, in his desiring moderation from the rude and violent soldiers?

We were sensible of the Lord's power and presence, and that He stood by us and strengthened us, in bearing our faithful Christian testimony for his Name and worship, through all these exercises and persecutions; and I was sensible also, that the Lord our God would plead our innocent cause, and that He often did plead it, even in the consciences of many of our adversaries, prosecutors, and judges, and that sometimes they were hard put to it, to carry on their work against us; and many times the

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Lord our God was pleased so to restrain the remainder of their wrath, as not to suffer them to proceed to the execution thereof, nor of the evils thereby designed : glory, honour, and dominion, be to our God and to the Lamb, for ever and ever !

In the 8th month, 1670, having been in the country and returning to London, I grew sick ; and my sickness turning to an ague and fever, I became very weak in body, so that for some weeks there appeared little hopes of recovery ; and I remained in much weakness until about the beginning of the second month, 1671, and part of that summer ; and then it pleased the Lord gradually to restore me to health and strength.

In that sickness, when most weak in body, being well prepared and freely resigned in the will of the Lord to die, that I might ever be with Him ; I had an opening or apprehension, that when I died my soul should be received into the bosom of my Heavenly Father.

While I was in great weakness of body, I was divers times told of the great and cruel suffering of our Friends in Southwark, for meeting together at their usual meeting-place at Horslydown ; how barbarously and cruelly they were used, and grossly abused by soldiers and armed men, both horse and foot ; being not only

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kept out of their meeting-house in the street, but both men and women were violently pushed with muskets and other weapons, beaten, bruised, hurt, and wounded, and much blood shed by the blows and wounds from those inhuman, cruel, and barbarous persecutors and brutish persons. The distressing accounts of these and such barbarities against the innocent, did very sorrowfully affect me; and I deeply sympathized in spirit with the innocent sufferers, earnestly praying to Almighty God for them, that He would preserve and deliver them, and rebuke that persecuting spirit by which they suffered: earnest prayers, with tears, being then the Church's very great concern, which the Lord our God in his own time graciously heard and answered: blessed be his Name!

The barbarous persecution against our said meeting in Southwark, was caused by the following order.

"At the Court at Whitehall, the 29th of July, 1670.

Present,

The King's Most Excellent Majesty.

His Highness prince Rupert	Earl of Anglesey
Lord Archbishop of Canterbury	Earl of Bath
Lord Keeper	Earl of Craven
Duke of Monmouth	Lord Ashley
Duke of Ormond	Mr. Treasurer
Earl of Ossory	Mr. Vice-chamberlain
Earl of Oxford	Mr. secretary Trevor.

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"His majesty being informed, that there have been of late, frequent conventicles and seditious meetings, under pretence of religious worship, contrary to and in contempt of the laws established, at a house or building at Horslydown, adjoining to the artillery garden; and that the persons who there assemble behave themselves in such a riotous and tumultuous manner, that if their meetings be any longer endured, his majesty's peace and the quiet of the government will thereby be manifestly endangered. For the prevention whereof it was this day ordered, his majesty present in council and by his express command, that Christopher Wren, esq. surveyor general of his majesty's works, do cause the said house or building to be pulled down and demolished, in case from henceforth any persons whatsoever, shall presume to meet or hold any conventicle or unlawful assembly therein, under colour of religious worship: and it was further ordered by his majesty, that this signification of this his royal pleasure, be affixed on the said building; to the end that the owners and occupiers of the same may take notice thereof, to prevent and hinder such meetings at their peril.

"JOHN NICHOLAS."

This order was both affixed on the door of the meeting-house and soon after put in execution; for they sent and very much spoiled and pulled down the meeting-house, and took away the boards, windows, benches, and forms, and sold them.

It is observable, that here was no judicial trial or legal proceeding in this hard case, but an order grounded upon information of our meetings being conventicles, seditious, riotous,

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and tumultuous; which information was altogether unjust and notoriously false.

Howbeit, our innocent Friends, as obliged in conscience toward Almighty God, resolved to keep their solemn meetings in His dread and fear; not being terrified therefrom by the rage and violence of their persecutors, but constantly resorted to their said meeting-house on first days, while it was standing; and after it was pulled down removed the rubbish, that they might meet on the ground where their own house stood; which they did, until by force haled away and barbarously used by the soldiers.

On the 25th of the 7th month, 1670, Friends being peaceably assembled at their usual meeting-place aforesaid; there came some musketeers and haled them forth into the street, where the troopers came and rode in among them, in a violent, furious manner, beating and abusing both men and women, punching them in the face and bodies with their carbines; and soon after the foot soldiers came and fell upon them also, and beat both men and women in a cruel and outrageous manner, also punching them on the feet with the but-ends of their muskets, till they broke some of them; also running the muzzle of their muskets violently against the bodies of many; and then a party

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of horse came desperately and strove to ride over them; but the horses being more merciful or naturally more gentle than the riders, would not go forward to tread the people underfoot; then the riders turning them, curbed and reined them to do mischief.

The number of those that were wounded and sorely bruised this day, was above twenty persons.

On the 2nd day of the 8th month, they being kept out of their meeting-place aforesaid, there came a party of foot and a party of horse and laid on Friends in a violent and cruel manner, knocking them with their muskets and pikes, and the horsemen with their carbines, until the blood lay in the streets; and so they continued for some time, until they broke several pikes and muskets and one carbine; and several were so beaten and bruised that their lives were in danger. They that were wounded and sorely bruised this day, were above thirty persons.

On the 9th of the 8th month, the soldiers, horse and foot, came to the meeting at the aforesaid place; and one of them having a shovel, threw dirt and mire upon both men and women, in a shameful manner. After him, both horse and foot furiously fell upon them; striking and knocking down, without regard to age

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or sex, in a very cruel manner, until they shed blood from many. And when some of the inhabitants in pity took them into their houses, to save their lives, the soldiers forced open the doors and haled them out again into the street, and plucked off their hats that they might strike on their bare heads, insomuch that many had their heads broken in a grievous manner; and thus they continued for some time; also tearing men and women's clothes off their backs, and haling women through the mire by their horse's sides; some of the foot soldiers using obscene expressions, and very indecent behaviour. A red coat soldier struck one woman Friend twice on the body with his musket, and once on the breast; another flung dirt in her face, so that she miscarried and hath never since been well through their abuses; whereby she did both lose her child, and her own life was greatly endangered. A man Friend, after he had suffered by blows, was carried into the meeting-place, where one demanded his money and endeavoured to rifle his pockets; cursing and threatening he would stab him, if he did not give it him; again swearing that he would pistol him.

The number of those sorely bruised, and that had of their blood shed that day, was above fifty persons.

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And on the 16th day of the 8th month, 1670, being again kept out of their meeting-place, there came a party of horse and foot ready to fall again violently upon our Friends; but some constables for some little time kept them off. Howbeit, at last they broke out into a rage, and some of the foot with the but-ends of their muskets, and the horsemen with great truncheons and staves, did so furiously lay on and beat them who were met, as if they would have killed all in the place; causing the blood to run down about the ears of many, insomuch that above twenty persons then received sore wounds and bruizes; and one constable endeavouring to stop them from shedding blood, and to keep the peace, they fell upon him also and broke his head; and when they were reprehended for their cruelty, some answered: "If you knew what orders we have, you would say we dealt mercifully with you."

The substance of the foregoing account was presented to the king and his council, and for a time there was some cessation of these cruelties; but afterward they begun in the like manner, though not to the same degree, yet with great threatenings to be worse and worse towards our Friends; which could not well be, except they were directly to commit murder on the place.

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It was observed, that when the troopers and soldiers have come and thus abused and wounded the innocent, some have asked them, saying: "How can ye deal thus with a people that have love and good will to all men, and make no resistance nor opposition?" They have replied: "We had rather and it would be better for us, if they did resist and oppose:" as if they wanted occasion to embrue their hands in innocent blood, and have the lives and estates of honest people for a prey. But as they never could get any such occasion against us, so the Lord our most gracious God, for his own Name and Truth's sake, restrained the remainder of our adversaries' wrath, frustrated their evil purposes, and disappointed their mischievous designs. And in Him we have trusted, who has helped and delivered us out of many troubles.

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SECTION XII.

Persecution continued with little abatement till the king's declaration in 1672.—George Whitehead successfully applies to the king for the liberation of about four hundred of his Friends—He travels with the king's Letters Patent under the Great Seal, to obtain the discharge of his Friends in Essex, Suffolk, Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, and Hertfordshire. He consults Judge Hale on the release of Friends in the distant counties — Procures their release by means of the sheriffs coming to London.

There was but little respite from persecution in twelve years time, from the year 1660 to 1672, in which was the last war at sea between the English and Dutch ; so that one judgment and calamity followed another, plague, fire, and war, unto great depopulation and devastation, showing God's heavy displeasure against persecution and cruelty, and that spirit which had been so highly at work against innocent, conscientious, and honest people ; yet many persecutors were so hardened, that they repented not of their cruelties, and we have observed in our times, how suddenly the Lord swept away many of that sort.

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Howbeit by this time, 1671–2, the king did seem to bethink himself, to take other measures than to continue persecution to destroy his own subjects, not knowing what issue the Dutch war against him might come to; insomuch that he published a declaration of indulgence to dissenters, to suspend the execution of penal laws in matters ecclesiastical, entitled,

"*His majesty's Declaration to all his loving subjects, dated March* 15, 1671–2. *Published by the advice of his Privy Council.*" *The principal heads whereof are as follows, viz.*

"Our care and endeavours for the preservation of the rights and interests of the church, have been sufficiently manifested to the world, by the whole course of our government since our happy restorations, and by the many and frequent ways of coercion that we have used for reducing all erring and dissenting persons, and for composing the unhappy differences in matters of religion, which we found among our subjects upon our return.

"But it being evident, by the sad experience of twelve years, that there is very little fruit of all those forcible courses, we think ourselves obliged to make use of that supreme power in ecclesiastical matters, which is not only inherent in us, but hath been declared and recognized to be so by several statutes and acts of parliament.

"And therefore we do now accordingly issue out this our declaration, as well for the quieting the minds of our good subjects in these points, for inviting strangers in this juncture to come and live under us, and for the better encouragement of all to a cheerful following of their trades and callings; from whence we hope, by the

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blessing of God, to have many good and happy advantages to our government.

"And in the first place, we declare our express resolution, meaning, and intention to be, that the Church of England be preserved, and remain entire in its doctrine, discipline, and government, as now it stands established by law, &c.

"We do in the next place declare our will and pleasure to be, that the execution of all, and all manner of penal laws in matters ecclesiastical, against whatsoever sort of Nonconformists or Recusants, be immediately suspended, and they are hereby suspended. And all judges, sheriffs, justices of the peace, &c. are to take notice of it, and pay due obedience thereunto.

"And we do declare, that we shall from time to time allow a sufficient number of places, as they shall be desired, in all parts of this our kingdom, for the use of such as do not conform to the Church of England, to meet and assemble in, in order to their public worship and devotion: which places shall be open and free to all persons.

"To prevent such disorders and inconveniences as may happen by this our indulgence, if not duly regulated, and that they may be the better protected by the civil magistrate, our express will and pleasure is, that none of our subjects do presume to meet in any place, until the same be allowed, and the teacher of that congregation be approved by us.

"And—we do further declare, that this our indulgence, as to the allowance of public places of worship, and approbation of teachers, shall extend to all sorts of nonconformists and recusants, except the recusants of the Roman Catholic religion, to whom we shall in no wise allow public places of worship, but only indulge them their share in the common exemption from the execution of the penal laws, and the exercise of their worship in their private houses only.

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"And if after this our clemency and indulgence, any of our subjects shall presume to abuse this liberty, and preach seditiously, &c.—We will let them see we can be as severe to punish such offenders—as we are indulgent to truly tender consciences." *

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* There is every reason to believe, that this declaration of the king was mainly, if not wholly designed to favour the advancement of Popery and arbitrary government; and that if he had been able to effect his purposes, both in regard to civil and ecclesiastical matters, the dissenters would have been placed in even a worse situation than before.

It is not at all surprising, that a people so deeply oppressed as the Quakers were at this time, and taking so little part in political affairs, should see, in the declaration, the *favour* rather than the *danger*. Neal says: "The protestant nonconformists had no opinion of the *dispensing power*, and were not forward to accept of liberty in that way; they were sensible the indulgence was not granted out of love to them, nor would continue any longer than it would serve the interest of popery." Other motives, however, than the fear of popery, appear to have influenced many of the nonconformists. They did not approve of a *general toleration*; but "maintained that it was setting up altar against altar, and that they should accept of nothing but a *comprehension*," in other words, that they should be admitted to full liberty, and a share in church preferments, and that others should not be *tolerated*. The Quakers always desired the free exercise of conscience for *all*, they had therefore no objection to the king's declaration on the ground of its *universality*. The Presbyterians also generally concluded that it was best to accept of the liberty granted them by the king; and some, says Neal, "endeavoured to prove that it was their duty to do so because it was their natural right; which no legislative power on earth had a right to deprive them of, as long as they remained dutiful subjects."—*See Neal, vol. 2, page 559. See also Rapin.*

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This declaration may, however, justly be said to record the result of king Charles's terrible experiment, during twelve years, to compose matters of difference in religion, and to reduce what he called erring and dissenting persons, by "forcible courses;" an experiment made in direct opposition to the Declaration from Breda. The confession of the result which the declaration contains, was, there is reason to believe, far from being generally palatable; independently of the political objection to the mode in which it was made. It gave, nevertheless, a great check to persecution, and enabled both the Quakers and other dissenters, to meet for religious worship without disturbance, and without being a prey to the rapine of wicked informers.

There were, however, at this time, above four hundred Friends in prison, for conscience' sake: some were under sentence of banishment, some of premunire, and some had endured ten or eleven years' imprisonment.

The state of these his suffering brethren deeply affected the mind of George Whitehead; and chiefly through his instrumentality the king was induced to discharge most of them, to remit their fines, and release, by his letters patent under the great seal, the estates of those who had forfeited them under judgment of premunire.

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Of his proceedings in this cause George Whitehead has given an account, too curious and interesting to be omitted or curtailed.

After speaking of his deep concern for his suffering Friends, he says :

I was moved to write a few lines to the king, requesting their liberty, which I intimated to our honest and loving Friend, Thomas Moor, who was often willing to move the king in behalf of our suffering Friends for their liberty, the king having some respect to him ; for he had an interest with the king and some of his council, more than many others had ; and I desired him to present my few lines to the king, which he carefully did ; and a few days after, both he and myself had access into the king's presence, and renewed our request which I had made to him in my letter ; whereupon the king granted us liberty to be heard on Friday, as he said, before the council, being the next council-day the same week.

And then Thomas Moor, myself, and our Friend Thomas Green, attended at the council chamber at Whitehall, and were all admitted before the king and a full council, and being called to go up before the king, who was at the upper end of the board, I had a fair opportunity to open the case of our suffering Friends as a conscientious people, chiefly to show the reason

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of our not swearing allegiance to the king ; that it was not in any contempt or disrespect, either to the king's person or government, but singly as it was a matter of conscience to us, not to swear at all, in any case, and that in sincere obedience to Christ's command and Gospel ministry, *Matt.* v. and *James* v. When I had openly and more fully pleaded our suffering Friends' case, the king gave this answer, viz. 'I'll pardon them,' &c.

Whereupon Thomas Moor pleaded the innocency of our Friends, that they needed no pardon, being innocent, &c. The king's own warrant in a few lines will discharge them ; for, where the word of a king is, there is power, said Thomas Moor. The king answered : "O, Mr. Moor, there are persons as innocent as a child, or children, new born, that are pardoned, that is, from the penalties of the law ; you need not scruple a pardon," &c. The lord keeper added : "I have told them that they cannot be legally discharged, but by a pardon under the great seal." Then stood up Duke Lauderdale, and made his reflection upon what Thomas Moor said, in this manner :

" May it please your majesty, I wonder that these men should be no better counselled to accept of your gracious pardon ; for if your majesty should by your own private warrant

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release them out of prison, their prosecutors may put them into prison again the next day; and still their estates, forfeited to you upon premunire, remain confiscate; so that their persons and estates cannot be safely discharged, without your majesty's pardon under the great seal." With which the rest of the council concurred.

Whereunto I returned this answer, viz. "It is not for us to prescribe, or dictate to the king and his council, what methods to take for our Friends' discharge; they know best their own methods in point of law; we seek the end thereof, namely, the effectual discharge of our suffering Friends out of prison, that they may live peaceably, and quietly enjoy their own," &c.

Whereupon they all appeared satisfied, and the king said: "Well, I'll pardon, or discharge them," &c.

After more discourse between the king and us, I looked about on the council, and in the Lord's power thus declared, viz. "I do not question but God at times inclines your hearts to tenderness towards the sufferers, especially those for conscience' sake. O! therefore take notice thereof, and mind that tenderness, and that which inclines your hearts to commiserate their conditions, who have long groaned and lain

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under heavy burdens, and sore oppressions," &c.

"As for our refusing the oath of allegiance, for which many suffer in prisons, God doth bear us witness, yea, God doth bear the sufferers record, that it is not from a disaffection to the king or government, but singly for conscience' sake, because it is an oath;" concluding with these words, "'This is the fast the Lord requires, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free.'" Being near the time of an appointed fast as I remember.

Pursuant to the king's promise of pardon, &c. the following order was given.

"AT THE COURT AT WHITEHALL, THE 8TH OF MAY, 1672.

"Whereas, his Majesty of his princely clemency, was graciously pleased to direct, that letters should be written from this board, to the sheriffs of the respective counties and cities, and counties and towns, and counties within his majesty's kingdom of England, and dominion of Wales, requiring them to return perfect lists and calenders of the names, time, and causes of commitment of all such prisoners, called Quakers, as remain in their several gaols or prisons, which they accordingly did; and the same were by order of his majesty in council, of the third instant, delivered into the hands, of the right honourable the lord keeper of the great seal of England, who having considered thereof, did this day return them again, together with his opinion thereupon, as followeth, viz.

"The Returns that are made touching the prisoners, in the several gaols, are of several kinds.

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"1. All such of them as are returned to be convicted, to be transported, or to be convicted of a premunire, upon whose convictions I suppose judgment was given, are not legally to be discharged, but by his majesty's pardon under the great seal.

"2. All such that are returned to be in prison upon writs of excommunicato capiendo, not mentioning the cause, ought not to be discharged till the cause appears; for if it be for tithes, legacies, defamations, or other private interests, they ought not to be discharged till the parties be satisfied.

"3. All those that are returned in prison for debt, or upon exchequer process, or of any of the other courts at Westminster, are not so discharged, till it be known for what cause those processes issued, and those debts be discharged.

"4. Those that are in prison for not paying their fines, ought not to be discharged without paying their fines, or a pardon.

"All the rest I conceive may be discharged.

"Which being this day taken into consideration, his majesty was graciously pleased to declare, that he would pardon all those persons called Quakers, now in prison for any offence committed relating only to his majesty, and not to the prejudice of any other person. And it was thereupon ordered by his majesty in council, that a list of the names of the Quakers in the several prisons, together with the causes of their commitment, be, and is herewith sent to his majesty's attorney general, who is required and authorized to prepare a bill for his majesty's royal signature, containing a pardon to pass the great seal of England, for all such to whom his majesty may legally grant the same. And in case of any difficulty, that he attend the lord keeper, and receive his directions therein.

"EDWARD WALKER."

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Here follows a copy also of the king's warrant to the attorney general.

"Our will and pleasure is, that you prepare a bill fit for the royal signature, and to pass our great seal of England, containing our gracious pardon unto, &c. [the place of the prisoners names.] Of all offences, contempts, and misdemeanours by them, or any of them committed before the twenty-first day of July, 1672, against the several statutes made in the first, twenty-third, and thirty-fifth years of the reign of queen Elizabeth; in the third year of the reign of our late royal grandfather, king James; and in the sixteenth year of our reign—in not coming to church and hearing Divine service; in refusing to take the oath of allegiance and supremacy, and frequenting or being present at seditious conventicles; and of all premunires, judgments, convictions, sentences of excommunication, and transportation thereupon; and of all fines, amercements, pains, penalties, and forfeitures whatsoever, thereby incurred, with restitution of lands and goods, and such other clauses, and non-obstantes, as may render this our pardon most effectual; for which this shall be your warrant.

"Given at our Court at Whitehall, the —— day of June, in the twenty-fourth year of our reign.

"To our Attorney General."

After we had taken out the foregoing order and warrant, our Friend Thomas Moor and I delivered the same to the king's attorney general, Sir Heneage Finch. Thomas again scrupling the word pardon to him, as he had before to the king, &c. he took up Thomas somewhat short, telling him: "Mr. Moor, if you'll not accept of his majesty's pardon, I'll tell him you'll not

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accept thereof." Then to pacify him, I told him, that it was not our business to question, but accept what the king had granted for relief of our suffering Friends, that they might be released and discharged from their imprisonments and sufferings, &c. Whereupon he seemed satisfied.

And further to inform and satisfy Thomas Moor in the case, after we came out from the attorney general, I got him to return again with me to his clerk, one Sanders, an old man, who engrossed the king's letters patents, or pardons, that he might inform Thomas Moor of the nature and manner thereof, which he very fairly did; whereupon Thomas said, now it begins to have some shape, &c. And then was better satisfied, as better understanding the nature of that instrument than before.

His scruples or objections against the word pardon, or its being necessary to our suffering Friends, were upon these tender points.

1. That they being innocent persons, needed no pardon, as criminals do.

2. That their testimony for Christ Jesus allowed of no pardon; neither indeed can we allow, or accept of any man's pardon in that case, singly considered; we cannot give away the cause of Christ, or our sincere obedience to Him, as any offence or crime, needing any

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pardon or forgiveness from men; nor does Christ require us to ask it of Him, in that wherein we truly obey Him, but accepts and approves of us therein.

But then on the other hand, we must reasonably allow of this distinction; that wherein we, or our Friends were judged or condemned by human laws, and the ministers thereof, unto imprisonments, fines, forfeitures, premunires, confiscation of estates to the king, and power given him to banish us, and thereby we made debtors to him. The king has power to remit, pardon, or forgive what the law has made a debt to him, as well as any creditor has power to forgive a debt owing him; and so to pardon and release his debtor out of prison.

The case is plain, and the distinction evident.

Neither pope, priest, nor prince can acquit or pardon men in the sight of God, for offences against Him; but the king may forgive debts owing by law to him, and release and re-convey his subjects' estates by law forfeit to him, or else he has less power than any of them. An earthly king cannot pardon a guilty conscience before God; but he can forgive debts owing him, and release estates forfeit to him, as well as persons who are within his power to release: good conscience and well-doing need no pardon, but deserve praise.

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Besides in this case of our premunired Friends, if the king had not re-conveyed their estates, as he did, by his letters patents, under the great seal of England, from him and his heirs, to them and their heirs, they had remained forfeit, and liable to future claims, and the proper owners to be dispossessed thereof; and therefore the report and counsel of the lord keeper, Sir Orlando Bridgman, to the king, in our Friends' case, before related, was both legal and safe for their discharge; being also recorded in the several offices, where patents and pardons are kept upon record, to have recourse to in cases of necessity.

The attorney general ordered his principal clerk —— Nicolls, to draw up the said bill, to contain the king's letters patents, for a full discharge and release of our suffering Friends from their imprisonments, sentence of banishment, fines, forfeitures, premunire, &c. which when he had done, I got Ellis Hooks, our writer, to draw out four or five fair copies thereof for expedition, to be passed and entered and remain upon record, in the several offices which the same was to pass through; as the privy seal, the signet, the patent, and hannaper offices, &c.

And understanding that, because of the great number in the patent, great fees would be

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required in most of those offices, except the lord keeper's, who had promised to remit his fee, and that he would ask none of us; which was a kindness, for there being above four hundred names of the sufferers, in one and the same instrument, to be discharged; we understood they would demand a great fee for each person, because, as we heard, it would cost one single person twenty or thirty pounds' charge in fees, to get a patent or pardon through all those offices, to pass under the great seal of England: insomuch that we were constrained to make further application to the king, to remit, or abate, the great fees, &c. Whereupon the king gave order, according to our request, as followeth.

LOCUS SIGILLI.

His majesty is pleased to command, that it be signified as his pleasure to the respective offices and sealers, where the pardon to the Quakers is to pass, that the pardon though comprehending great numbers of persons, do yet pass as one pardon, and pay but as one.

ARLINGTON.

At the Court at Whitehall,
the 13th of Sept. 1672.

Though we had this warrant from the king, yet we had trouble from some of the covetous clerks, who did strive hard to exact upon us.

When the instrument for discharge of the prisoners was granted to our Friends, there

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being other dissenters, besides Quakers, in some prisons, as Baptists, Presbyterians, and Independents, some of their solicitors, especially one William Carter, seeing what way we had made with the king, for our Friends' release, desired their friends in prison might be discharged with ours, and have their names in the same instrument; and earnestly requested my advice or assistance, which I was very willing to give in compassion to them; and accordingly, I advised them to petition the king, with the names of the prisoners in it, for his warrant, to have them inserted in the same patent with the Quakers, which accordingly they did petition for, and obtain.

So that there are a few names of other dissenters, who were prisoners in * Bedfordshire, Kent, and Wiltshire, as I remember, in the same catalogue and instrument with our Friends, and released thereby: which I was also very glad of, that they partook of the same benefit, through our industry. Our being of different judgments and societies, did not abate my compassion or charity, even towards those who have been my

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* Amongst the names, I was glad to recognize that of the justly esteemed author of the Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan. EDITOR.

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opposers in some cases. Blessed be the Lord my God, who is the Father and Fountain of mercies, whose love and mercies in Christ Jesus to us, should oblige us to be merciful and kind one to another, we being required to love mercy, as well as to do justly, and to walk humbly with the Lord our God.

After the king had signed a copy of the said instrument, on several skins of parchment, and we had got it engrossed aforehand for expedition, in the patent office, in chancery hand, as is usual, and had then got it passed under the great seal of England, there being eleven skins of vellum in chancery hand, it was swelled to that bigness, by reason the names of above four hundred persons were repeated eleven times over in it, that Ellis Hooks, and I, and some other Friends, were hard put to it and troubled, to find out a way or means to have it dispensed to all the prisons throughout England and Wales, where our Friends were confined; that they might be released in due time, and not be too long detained under confinement, as many had been; especially since with great industry we had obtained their discharge.

Howbeit we could not suddenly, nor easily find out an expedient sufficient, nor extensive enough to release all our Friends, prisoners in

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England and Wales, from east to west, and from south to north.

The best expedient I could at first pitch upon, was, to get two duplicates of the original instrument, prepared, and passed under the great seal, as the first was, which I got done very shortly; and then sent messengers on purpose with them several ways, to the sheriffs and gaolers; as into Sussex, Bucks, Oxford, Warwick, and Stafford, where our Friends had suffered long in their gaols, that they might be forthwith discharged out of prison; which accordingly was done, when the king's discharge under the great seal, was shown to the respective sheriffs and officers concerned, by our Friends, the messengers, sent on purpose to see our dear Friends released out of their long confinements.

And although at that time, I had been in long and great labours and solicitation, for the liberty of our oppressed Friends in prisons, and also thereby sometimes weakened and impaired in my health and strength; yet I was willing to undertake a journey into Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Hertfordshire; to see our Friends released out of the gaols in those counties, as also in Huntingdon and Cambridge.

And Edward Man and William Gosnell of London, were willing to accompany me that journey: so having the original patent, under

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the great seal, we all took horse early, and got to Chelmsford that day, and lodged at the inn by the prison that night; and the next day, the quarter sessions being to be held in that town, for the county of Essex; we went in the morning to several justices of peace, where they were together at another inn in the town. When we came before them, I gently told them our errand, and what was the intent of our coming there before them; and producing the king's letters patents, showed them what names of our Friends were in it, who then were prisoners in Chelmsford prison, and how in it they were discharged: they seeming somewhat surprised at the sight of such a great instrument, under the great seal of England, and that in favour of so many Quakers, and some of them having no good-will to us, seemed somewhat disgusted at our hats; however I friendly told them, I hoped they would allow of the discharge, and release our Friends out of prison. So after they had it into court, they ordered our Friends who were in that prison, to be released.

So we proceeded forward in our journey towards Edmunds-Bury in Suffolk, in order to reach the quarter sessions there; which began the beginning of the week following the other in Essex; being about two or three days between each session, as I remember. The justices in

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Suffolk carried pretty fair towards us, and after viewing the king's discharge in court, seemed affected with it; but it so happened that all our Friends' names then in that prison, who were intended in the king's grant, were not in the said discharge, though their case was included, being the case of many others therein.

We could not suppose where the omission had happened, unless in the sheriff's return of the names and cases of Quakers in prison, which the king had ordered. The under-sheriff took it somewhat hard, that we should suspect him for such omission; however I pressed the justices to release those Friends out of prison, whose names were omitted, seeing their case came under the king's clemency, and they had right to their liberty as well as the rest, in point of justice: so their liberty was obtained, the justices not opposing but allowing thereof.

At that time while we were in Edmunds-Bury, I providentially and very opportunely met with the under-sheriff for Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire, who was a very fair, civil man; and showed him the king's patent, and the names of our Friends in it who then were prisoners in those two counties; and I desired him to see them delivered out of prison, in both counties; which he was very ready to under-

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take, and honestly performed, so far as ever I could hear.

From Bury we travelled into Norfolk, and to Norwich; and there meeting with the high-sheriff, got our Friends released, who were prisoners and named in the king's patent to be discharged.

We returned to Hertford in two day's time, before the quarter sessions there ended; and Henry Stout producing the said patent, the magistrates released those Friends, prisoners, that were concerned there.

In two weeks time we performed that journey and service for our suffering Friends, in the said counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Norwich, Huntingdon, Cambridge, and Hertford.

When we were returned to London, we were yet more concerned for our suffering Friends in the more remote counties and prisons; namely, those in the northern and western parts of England, and also in Wales; for it was a difficult point and tedious undertaking, to send messengers into all those remote counties and places where many Friends were prisoners, with only three such great instruments under the great seal of England, as that original which we carried into Suffolk and Norfolk, and the two duplicates, which other Friends carried about into the other counties before mentioned. The

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patent we carried was so big and cumbersome, in a leathern case and tin box, and great seal to it, that Edward Man was so cumbered with carrying it, hanging by his side, that he was fain to tie it across the horse's back behind him.

Now being sensible of the difficulty and delay it would be, to dispense the same to the several counties and gaols throughout England and Wales; and what a hard matter it would be to move the king again for any instrument, pursuant to his pardon already granted and confirmed, for their more speedy deliverance out of prisons so remote, either by proclamation or warrant from some of his privy council, or the secretary of state, or attorney general, or otherwise. And considering the great number of names and places mentioned in the said pardon, we did not then see how we could acceptably move for such an instrument or expedient. Besides, I having had so much wearisome toil and solicitation, for what we had already obtained for Friends' releasement; the labour and difficulties considered, I was minded to acquaint judge Hale, who was then chief justice, therewith, to see what he would say to it; if he could put us in a way to get our Friends released, who were in such remote prisons as before mentioned.

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Whereupon I went to judge Hale's house at Acton, and our Friend Ellis Hooks with me; where we met with the judge at home, and I intimated our case and difficulty to him; which he fairly heard, and viewed over a copy of the king's pardon or letters patents, so termed. How to have the same dispensed, for the speedy release of our Friends throughout England and Wales, was our difficulty; and so many as the king had given his grant for their discharge under the great seal, we desired might be delivered out of prison before winter, which was then approaching; and considering, as I told him, that many of our Friends had lain long under strait confinements, it might be their death if they were detained much longer, especially in the winter season.

The judge appearing very serious and intent upon the matter, told us, that if they would remove themselves by *habeas corpus*, and come before him at the king's bench: "I will release them," said he; that is, upon the king's pardon. I then signified to him, that would be such a hardship and hazard as we durst not put them upon; because of the remoteness of the counties in the north, &c. And divers prisoners' healths were so impaired by their long and hard confinements, that it might endanger their lives to remove them up to London, being one or two

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hundred miles or more; also many were much disabled and made poor by their sufferings and imprisonments, that the charge of such removal would be so great that it would be too heavy for them.

The judge then proposed something of an instrument from the attorney general: though it was not his place to give us counsel, as he said, yet he appeared willing to help our suffering Friends if he could, by proposing such expedients as he could then think of. His compassion and good will towards us, I could not but take notice of; and we parted kindly.

Yet hitherto we were at a loss, how to expedite our poor suffering Friends out of the remote prisons: by all the advice given to us, we could not get all our Friends actually delivered out of the gaols near so soon as I desired.

Howbeit, the Michaelmas term, as it is called, being then very near, and the under sheriffs coming out of the several remote counties to the term; I told Ellis Hooks we might take the great patent, and show to the sheriffs at their inns and offices, that they might draw out liberates and send to the gaols in their respective counties, to set our Friends at liberty.

We went to the sheriff of Yorkshire, who was an ancient man; and I showed him the patent

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and the names of the Friends who were prisoners in their county, and castle of York, and those principal clauses for their discharge; which he readily assented to, and bid us give him a copy thereof, and he would draw up and send a liberate to the gaoler for their release; which accordingly we did, and he performed.

I was thereby farther informed how we might hasten and dispatch our Friends' release, in other remote counties.

Whereupon I drew up an exact form of a liberate, agreeable to the king's patent, briefly comprehending the heads thereof which concerned the prisoners' discharge, and gave it Ellis Hooks, to transcribe so many copies thereof as we needed for the remaining remote counties, where our Friends were not set at liberty; with advice to him to insert the prisoners' names in each liberate respectively appertaining to the same county; as those in Montgomeryshire prison in a distinct warrant or liberate, for the sheriff of that county; and in like manner for the other counties and prisons in Wales, where Friends were detained. And the like particular warrants respectively, for the sheriffs of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Cumberland, Durham, Lancashire, and for the rest of the counties, where Friends were

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not released out of prisons, I got liberates ready prepared for the sheriffs severally to sign and seal.

Ellis Hooks and I went to the sheriffs severally, at their inns and offices, and showed them the king's patent with the liberates, that they might see how agreeable they were; and they approved thereof, and readily signed and sealed each liberate; being a warrant to each gaoler, to set our Friends at liberty out of gaol in each county where they had been detained, as many of them had been for a long time; so that at last, through much labour, care, and diligence, the difficulty we had been under came to be removed, that is, the setting at liberty our dear Friends, by virtue of the king's letters patent, who were prisoners in the remote counties.

And I do in deep humility, tenderness of spirit, and with a thankful heart, retain the remembrance how the Lord our God helped and enabled me, to go through that great care and diligence, in solicitations for the liberty of my dear suffering Friends and brethren; and though I laboured for the same near six months together before it was fully effected, the Lord gave me such great encouragement, peace, and comfort, in my daily endeavours for them; and my love towards them was such as made the

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same more easy to me ; in all which I still have great satisfaction and peace, which remains with me, in Christ Jesus my Lord and my God. I bless his Name and power which upheld and strengthened me : let Him have the glory, praise, and dominion for ever ! saith my soul.

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SECTION XIII.

The Parliament express to the king their dissatisfaction with his declaration.—Persecution renewed in 1673. —The case of Friends presented to the king in 1679.—George Whitehead and T. Burr imprisoned in Norwich in 1680, and proceedings of the quarter sessions.—Their manly and Christian defence on their trial.

The liberty granted to tender consciences by king Charles the Second's declaration, 1671–2, held not long; for the Parliament being not reconciled to the liberty granted and allowed thereby, took occasion against the said declaration, and moved the king to cancel and make it void; alleging that thereby he extended his prerogative too far, or advanced it above the law, by suspending the execution of penal laws in matters ecclesiastical; suggesting what dangerous consequence it might be of, to have such a precedent remaining. But they took no care of Christ's prerogative and government over the consciences of his subjects: they must be exposed to severe sufferings, oppressions, and cruelty, for conscience' sake towards Him, and for obeying his doctrine, chiefly in refusing to

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swear at all, and for solemnly meeting together in his Name and spiritual worship.

If the Parliament and all parties who were displeased with the king's said declaration, because not an act of Parliament but of prerogative, had been so generous and noble as to have allowed a general liberty to tender consciences, or freedom from persecution, they might easily have turned the substance or effect of the king's said declaration into an act of Parliament. And no doubt the king would readily have signed and confirmed the same, seeing he had so often not only publicly promised liberty to tender consciences, but also in his declaration from Breda positively and voluntarily promised, "That no man shall be disquieted or called in question, for differences in opinion in matters of religion, which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom; and that we shall be ready to consent to such an act of Parliament, as upon mature deliberation shall be offered to us for the full granting that indulgence."

And moreover, in the king's declaration concerning ecclesiastical affairs, dated October the 25th, 1660, it is again declared: "In a word, we do again renew what we have formerly said in our declaration from Breda, for the liberty of tender consciences: that no man shall be dis-

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quieted or called in question, for differences in opinion in matters of religion, which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom, &c."

And in the same declaration it is further said: "Our present consideration and work is, to gratify the private consciences of those who are grieved with the use of ceremonies, by indulging to, and dispensing with, the omitting these ceremonies."

And in the king's speech to both houses of Parliament, the 8th of July, 1661: "It is to put myself in mind as well as you, that I so often (I think so often as I come to you) mention to you my declaration from Breda; and let me put you in mind of another declaration published by yourselves about the same time, and which I am persuaded made mine the more effectual. An honest, generous, and Christian declaration, signed by the most eminent persons who had been the most eminent sufferers; in which you renounced all former animosities, and the memory of all former unkindnesses. And, my lords and gentlemen, let it be in no man's power, to charge me or you with the breach of our words or promises, which can never be a good ingredient to our future security." And in the chancellor's speech to both houses, May the 8th: "He told you but now, (meaning the king,) that he valued himself

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much upon keeping his word, upon performing all that he promiseth to his people." *

Now upon the whole it is observable, that when the king made and so often repeated those promises of liberty to tender consciences, there appeared no design of persecution, or intention thereof, to violate his promises, but the contrary; and how easy it might have been, to have established that liberty by a law: but too many selfish and partial men were otherwise minded; for before the reign of king Charles the Second was expired, some of these who were against his declaration aforesaid, would have had an "act of comprehension," to have included in the Church of England some parties of dissenters, as Presbyterians and such like, with allowances, exceptions, or limitations, so as not to be made conformable to the said Church, in all her articles, ceremonies, and formalities, but to have been dispensed with, or allowed in some things not esteemed essential; so as they might be comprehended or incorpo-

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* George Whitehead's loyalty, and faith in the king's word appear to have been inextinguishable.

It is probable that his acquaintance with William Penn, who appears to have taken the most favourable view of the king's conduct as well as that of the duke of York, had considerable influence on George Whitehead. *Editor.*

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rated into one with the Church of England, exclusive of all other dissenters, more conscientious than themselves were in that point, since they could not come so near in a conformity or compliance as themselves; and therefore the most conscientious dissenters of all sorts, excluded the comprehension and not allowed a general liberty to exercise their religion and conscience, must still be exposed to persecution, suffering, and ruin, under the penal laws, if that partial project and comprehension had taken effect, by a church made up of presbytery and episcopacy: Oh then, who should have been suffered to stand before them, without conformity to such elders and bishops! This partial project and selfish design divers of us were concerned in conscience to oppose, argue, and testify against, to certain members of Parliament concerned for such a comprehension, and others also.

I remember I discoursed with divers of them about it, showing them wherein they gave away the cause of all the most honest and conscientious dissenters, and thereby greatly lost ground, &c.

It was well that project of such a comprehension did not take effect, there was doubtless a Divine Hand and Providence in its prevention. And would it not have gone hard and sore

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against the grain, with the high Episcopal clergy, if Presbyterian ministers, &c. had partaken with them, and been made sharers in their parish churches and livings, tithes and glebe lands, oblations and obventions, profits and revenues, wherein they were formerly paramount, and chiefly if not wholly invested for the space of twelve years or above, until the year 1660, and that the act of uniformity came to be in force; and then Presbytery must give way to Episcopacy, and lay down church revenues or else conform; whereupon many great Presbyterian ministers did conform with such pretences as these—they must not lay aside preaching the Gospel, for want of conforming or dispensing with a few ceremonies, which are but things indifferent and inconsiderable: their great livings, tithes, oblations, and profits, were to them far more considerable.

In the mean while, their solemn league and covenant against Episcopacy, &c. was not well considered or thought on by such occasional conformists; yet some of them who were of the more zealous presbytery, having been noted for their zeal in respect to their solemn league and covenant against prelacy or episcopacy, and pretending some greater reformation, deserted those counties and places where they had been so noted for their zeal and reformation, &c. and

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removed into other counties and places, some southward and some north, where they were not so known, and could more easily conform for a church living, and there put on the surplice, sign infants with the sign of the cross, bow to the high altar, conform to all the ceremonies of their church, and plead decency and good order in them all; which before were but superstitious relics of popery, and altogether indecent in God's worship.

Yet to do the party right; some ministers and people were more conscientious than to allow of such an occasional conformity for lucre's sake; and indeed many could not obtain parish church livings if they would, where there remained some old Episcopal clergymen who had claim to the livings, having been formerly turned out of the same; so that those who could not conform on such occasions, nor obtain parish maintenance, were fain to keep private meetings, termed conventicles, as long as they could or durst; for few of them would suffer for their religion, but rather privily slide away or flee out at back doors, rather than be seized or taken by the persecutors; though many of the Baptists suffered imprisonment at first. But the heat of the day, the burden of suffering and persecution, chiefly arose and fell upon us the poor Quakers; for when we were

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not suffered to meet quietly in our public meeting-houses, but many of us were violently haled out to prison, and the rest by force turned out and kept in the street; there have we stood and kept our meetings without doors, both when turned out and when officers were set on purpose to keep us wholly out in the streets; where we have often met and stood, both in winter and summer, and all weathers, as near our own meeting-houses as we could get, and there waited upon the Lord our God, in testimony against our injurious, hard-hearted persecutors; insomuch that some of the other dissenters, who durst not meet publicly, have thanked God that He had enabled the Quakers to stand in the gap, and bear the brunt, and keep the blow off them.

The king being prevailed upon in a short time, I think about two years, to cancel or vacate his aforesaid indulgence to tender consciences; some persecutors began to appear again, and a new persecution arose in divers places, where they picked up Friends who bore public testimony to Truth; and yet for some time after, we could travel quietly and visit our meetings in many counties. But the old and chief snare which our great persecutors were ready to make use of against us, was the oath of allegiance, knowing that we could not swear

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in any case, either for the king or for ourselves; though we sincerely practised and performed just allegiance toward him, as true and faithful subjects, giving Cæsar his due and to God his due, the things that are truly His; namely his worship and service according to our conscientious persuasion in matters of faith and religion; rather laying down our bodies as the street to be trod upon, than subjecting our souls for our persecutors to go over them; and when they could not go over our souls, nor make them yield and bow to their corrupt wills and impositions, then would they hunt us out, to apprehend and confine our bodies in prisons and jails.

In the 10th month, 1673, our dear Friends and brethren, George Fox and Thomas Lower were apprehended; being at a Friend's house in Worcestershire, and on their journey towards their habitations in Lancashire, but were obstructed and committed to prison at Worcester, by warrant from one Henry Parker, justice of peace, and detained prisoners a considerable time. The injustice and illegality done against them, is farther related and detected in George Fox's journal.

After George Fox had long remained prisoner at Worcester, Thomas Moor and I went to the king at Hampton court, and requested

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his liberty out of prison. Though the king gave us little answer, yet after some time the Lord made way for George Fox's release.

This imprisonment I have mentioned, that it may appear how early the invidious persecutors fell to work, after the king's declaration as aforesaid. The persecutors being let loose again, the several ways of persecution were renewed against us, the people called Quakers; as, for not swearing allegiance, the penalty was imprisonment and premunire; for not going to parish church, so called, twenty pounds a month, or two thirds of a person's estate, forfeited and seized on exchequer process, or excommunication, and writs *de excommunicato capiendo*, issued out to take and imprison the persons excommunicated. And for our innocent religious meetings, great spoil was made upon our goods; they being taken and torn away by a company of loose, idle informers, who cared not what havoc and spoil they made upon us, nor how much they ruined honest, industrious families; besides the many hard and tedious imprisonments which many of us underwent, both before and after the before-mentioned declaration of indulgence.

Because of these our sufferings on divers sorts of prosecutions and processes before hinted, application was often made to the king, and

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sometimes to the judges before they went their several circuits, for some redress and relief from those hardships and severe sufferings; and great endeavours were used at least, to make the king and his ministers sensible thereof, according to the following brief accounts and intimations, viz.

"To the King's Justices, appointed for the several circuits throughout England.

"Many of our Friends called Quakers being continued prisoners, and many prosecuted to great spoil by informers, and on qui-tam writs, and by presentments and indictments for twenty pounds per mensem, in divers counties throughout England, only on the account of religion and tender conscience toward Almighty God; we esteem it our Christian duty to remind you of their suffering condition, as we have done from time to time.

"Humbly entreating you in the circuits, to enquire into the several causes of their commitments, and other sufferings which they lie under, and to extend what favour you can to them for their ease and relief. Praying the Almighty to direct and preserve you; we are,

"Your Christian friends and well-wishers."

But we found little redress from the judges in those days, after divers applications to them; except when the king gave them some instructions thereunto; for which end we sometimes applied to the king to stay proceedings against our Friends; whereupon he showed some compassion towards the sufferers. Their case was presented to him in manner following.

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"To the King.

"The case of the people called Quakers, who are still sufferers by prosecutions upon old statutes made against Popish recusants."

Presented to the king by George Whitehead, William Mead, and John Osgood, the 16th of the 11th month, 1679. Being introduced by William Chiffins, esq. closet keeper to the king, as he had given leave and appointed.

After a brief introductory speech to the king, by George Whitehead, the following case was presented and read, viz.

"It may be remembered, that about two years last past, our case of sufferings was represented before the king and his privy council, that is, the late and unwonted prosecutions upon the statutes of the 23rd and 28th of Queen Elizabeth, made against Popish Recusants; by colour whereof, and of the statute of the 3rd of king James, two-thirds of our lands, tenements, hereditaments, leases, and farms, for two or three years then last past, were seized into the king's hands; and process made out of his exchequer twice yearly, to collect the rents and profits thereof, for which the bailiffs seldom take less than double; their distresses frequently amounting to more than the yearly value of the whole estates. The king was then pleased to express his sense of the unreasonableness of such persecution, saying: 'It was hard we should suffer by laws made against us, and also by those laws never made or designed against us.' But the Parliament being then sitting, the king referred us to them, as the more proper place for an effectual redress.

"In obedience whereunto we made our application to the House of Commons; who, by a committee, then examined, by witnesses and records, the justness and reasonableness of our complaints, and had true resent-

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ments thereof; but before they could yield us any relief, they were prorogued and soon after dissolved.

"We also represented our case to the succeeding Parliament, who for our relief were pleased to insert a clause in a bill then before them, to distinguish betwixt Papists and Protestants, which would have tended to redress our grievance. But the king also proroguing that Parliament before the said bill had past its last customary reading in the upper house, we are still left under the said heavy pressures.

"Now although the most effectual redress of these present and future prosecutions, as the king has directed, would be by act of Parliament; yet it being so, that the king has power by law to grant a stay or cessation of processes, which are made out to collect the fines and profits levied upon our estates, that is, the forfeitures being made to the king:

"We therefore in true Christian humility desire, that the king will be pleased to grant a present stay or cessation of process; until we can have a more effectual redress in a parliamentary way."

The king received this case with a list of the sufferers, that is, of our Friends under prosecution; and he was pleased to give this answer, viz. "That it is very unreasonable you should thus suffer by laws that were never intended against you; I am against persecution or persecuting any for conscience, and I shall consider of your case and afford you what relief I can; I will advise with my lord chancellor and attorney general about it, what way I may do it," &c. That is, what we requested, that he would

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please to give order to put a stop to process against us in the exchequer, &c.

The king farther told us: "That it should be moved the next council day; he would remember it, and Shephard should give us notice." He being a noted sort of a witty person and courtier, who much attended the king and was intimate with him.

We were sensible that the king at that time, as I have known him at several others, was touched in his conscience, and somewhat tenderly affected with the extremity and long continuance of those great sufferings upon our Friends in this and other cases; but some persons near him were not our Friends and had too much influence upon him, whereby his good inclinations against persecution, and for liberty of conscience, as well as his promises for the same, were many times frustrated; and our suffering heavy pressures and troubles by persecutions, were in great measure continued under his reign, till his days were ended.

And though our solicitations did not at all times take the effect desired, yet I had this secret encouragement to move betimes in a good cause, and to pursue the same so far as I could, believing that if it was for some time delayed or rejected, it would in the Lord's time take effect: and if at any time we did not receive

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present gain, that we should not lose by early moving in and following a just cause. For many times when we have laboured under severe persecutions and confinements, &c. we have often called for justice when we could not have it; yet thereby we have cleared our consciences and had the more inward peace, believing that the just God would appear for us if men would not hear us. And our God has often manifestly pleaded our cause, and vindicated our innocency in divers respects; both in men's consciences and in removing our implacable persecutors, when they have filled up their measures.

George Whitehead did not escape a share in the renewed sufferings of the Society, which arose from the cancelling of the king's order. In the year 1680 he visited the city of Norwich; and meeting there unexpectedly with his friend Thomas Burr, a fellow minister, they thought it right to attend the meeting of their Friends on the first day of the week, although they understood it was not unlikely to be disturbed.

The meeting in the morning was held peaceably; but in the afternoon, whilst George Whitehead was preaching to the people, a number of informers rushed into the meeting; making a great noise, and endeavouring to push

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their way towards George Whitehead to pull him down.

The people however it seems did not allow them to pass; and George Whitehead desired to know whether they had any legal authority for their proceedings. They refused to give him any satisfaction on this point; but insinuated that he might be a Jesuit, and demanded the names of the strangers. With this demand George Whitehead immediately complied, for the satisfaction of the people; and after disturbing the meeting as much as they could, the informers thought proper to retire. Soon, however, one of the sheriffs of the city made his appearance; and the people making way for him, he required the two Friends to follow him; and accompanied by the informers, conducted the unresisting prisoners to the gaol.

In about two hours they were summoned to appear before the recorder; and on being brought into his room, they found the priest of the parish along with him, who during the examination evinced no friendly spirit towards them. The recorder apparently suspecting them of being popish emissaries, questioned them closely as to whether they had orders from Rome; to which they gave a plain denial, declaring in the most solemn manner their abhorrence of popery.

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He then questioned them about their preaching that day at the meeting, threatening to fine them twenty pounds each, under the Conventicle Act. Finding that they would not deposit these sums, or give security for their appearance at the ensuing sessions, or take the oath of allegiance, he committed them to prison.

From hence George Whitehead and Thomas Burr wrote a respectful letter to the magistrates of the city, before whom they were to be brought, entreating their moderation and that they would not allow them to be deprived of a full and fair hearing. A very minute account of their trial, collected and compared at the sessions by several hands, is preserved in George Whitehead's narrative; from which the following is abstracted.

At the quarter sessions for the city and county of Norwich, the 28th day of April, so called, 1680.

The prisoners were brought to the bar.

Their hats ordered to be taken off.

George Whitehead standing up to the bar, began thus, viz.

"The law of England requires two things of the court, with respect to the prisoners, viz.

"First, the patience of the court; and second-

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ly, the indifferency of the court towards the prisoners.

"That their case may be patiently heard and considered, without prejudication, before any judgment pass against them. This we expect from the court. We have been five weeks in prison; it is meet the court should know for what. Pray let our mittimus be produced and read in court, that it may be understood what charge we suffer under."

Recorder. "There is no need of your mittimus to be read here; I will give account of the cause; I will inform the court. These persons had been two months from home, and had been up and down the country in Suffolk, at a burial, &c. And then they came hither, and here they gathered a company together of about two hundred, and the officers went from me to dissipate them, but could not; whereupon I sent the sheriff, and he took them away and put them in prison. And then they were brought before me; and after conviction made, I proffered them that if they would pay their fines, I would not commit them to prison; but when they would not, I tendered the oath of allegiance to them; and after they would not take it, I sent them to gaol; as I think I very well might."

George Whitehead. "We are Englishmen,

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and have a right to travel in any part of the nation," &c.

Recorder. "There is a law, and the Church of England will never be at quiet till some of you be hanged by that law," (or till such fellows as you are hanged.)

George Whitehead. "The court may see the frame of the recorder's spirit towards us, and that he stands not as a person indifferent but a party against us. Thou oughtest not to inveigh against the prisoners, nor threaten us; that stands not with the indifferency of the court; nor yet thy determining or resolving aforehand against us, as thou hast done. Judges ought not to declare their opinions aforehand against the prisoner; Hussey, the chief justice, would not do it to the king, in the case of Humphrey Stafford the arch-traitor, but begged of the king he would not desire him to declare his opinion aforehand, that the prisoner might come judicially before him and have justice done him. And the king accepted his request in the case."—Interrupted. See Cook's Inst. *part 3, fol.* 29.

Recorder. "What king's reign was that in?"

George Whitehead. "In king Henry the seventh's."

Recorder. "I perceive you have read," (or are read.)

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George Whitehead. "Seeing that none of the court have as yet had any hand against us, except the recorder, we may charitably hope that the court will stand indifferent towards us, and let us have a fair hearing before any determination. The laws of our nation require a due course of proceeding, before men be sentenced or condemned; so there ought to be a due hearing: as where a process or proceeding consists of several parts, each part ought to be enquired into and answered in due order, without confounding one thing with another, or putting that first which in course is last. Let us have a fair hearing and trial: let us be tried before we be hanged."

Recorder. "You were sent to prison for refusing the oath of allegiance."

George Whitehead. "That is a mistake; we were sent to prison for being at a meeting charged to be against the peace; which is the premises in our mittimus to which we are here to answer. And therefore, that all may know what is laid to our charge, we desire our mittimus may be read, that so, if there be any persons that will undertake to prove the matter in charge, let us see them and have liberty to answer the premises contained in the mittimus."

Recorder. "I will show you, that when a

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person is committed to prison, he may have several actions laid upon him, if new charges be brought against him," &c.

Prisoner. "I grant that; but that is not our case; for we presume the recorder had no new matter brought against us, after he committed us to prison; and therefore could not lay any new charge upon us."

The recorder continued to refuse the reading of the mittimus upon which they were committed, and after some further altercation said: "Put the oath to them that is in the second mittimus."

George Whitehead. "I beg of this court for God's sake and the king's sake, to be heard fairly without thus being run upon: for God's sake, because He is a God of justice and truth; and for the king's sake, because the king's will towards us as subjects, is what the law and justice wills. As his will is the will of the law, he wills that none of his subjects be injured or unduly prosecuted contrary to law. I appeal to the mayor as chief magistrate of this city, and the rest of the justices here present, whether ye ought not to see us have that right done us, as to have our mittimus produced and read in court, that you may understand the cause of our commitment: we were not committed for refusing the oath. We intreat that the court may

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hear our mittimus, that we may not have other premises put upon us than what is contained therein."

Recorder. "It shall not be read; there is no need of that: I am present that committed you."

George Whitehead. "I appeal to the mayor and the rest of the justices, who are more indifferent towards us for justice in this case, viz. that we may have our mittimus read and answer to the premises contained in it; and not thus be run upon and diverted with that which is none of the premises," &c.

Mayor. "You have appealed to me; truly we are tradesmen and no lawyers; we leave matters of law to the recorder; he knows the law and we must acquiesce in his judgment."

Thomas Burr. "Thou understandest we ought to have our mittimus read and be heard; and thou art the chief magistrate in this court," &c.

George Whitehead. "You all have a conscience towards God, and an equal and just law therein; and you are under a severe obligation, to wit, your oath, to see justice and right done us. We appeal to the mayor and justices here for justice, in relation to our mittimus, that it may not be thus evaded. We are at this sessions to answer to the premises or matter of charge therein contained; you are concerned

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in conscience to do us right herein. The honour of this court is also concerned, not to see us precipitated nor run down upon other premises. The mittimus was given under the hand and seal of your recorder, his reputation and honour are also concerned," &c.

Recorder. "My honour concerned! wherein?"

George Whitehead. "Thy reputation and honour are concerned, in that thou art bound to stand by our mittimus; it is under thy hand and seal: now thou goest about to evade it, by imposing other premises upon us."

Recorder. "They sent their mittimus to the attorney-general, and solicited him for advice, to know whether they were according to law or not. And moved for a *habeas corpus*; but it would not be granted."

George Whitehead. "We neither sent to the attorney-general, nor have we yet moved for a *habeas corpus*."

Recorder. "The second mittimus or warrant is about their refusing the oath of allegiance; as for the first, I did not make it by book."

George Whitehead. "It is not a reasonable thing to bring a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him: it was contrary to the very law of the Romans.—" Interrupted.

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Recorder. "What tell you us of the law of the Romans; we have laws of our own to act by," &c.

George Whitehead. "It is according to the law of reason and nations, that the crimes and offences should be known, for which prisoners are committed and detained in prison; else why should they suffer?"

Recorder. "The court must tender you the oath."

George Whitehead. "Wherefore then were we committed and detained in prison above these five weeks? If we be offenders, let us know our offence for which we were committed; if not, do not go about to ensnare us; do not seek occasion against us. It is enough to punish us, if found guilty of what is charged against us in our mittimus. We entreat the mayor and court to do us right in this matter, that our mittimus may be read."

Mayor and some others. "Well, you shall have it read."

George Whitehead. "Keeper, where is our mittimus; produce it that it may be read, as the mayor and other justices here present have engaged."

Recorder. "Tender them the oath; put the oath to them. If you will take it, that shall serve, &c. If not, you incur a premunire," &c.

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The clerk begins to read the oath.

George Whitehead. "The oath is none of the premises contained in our mittimus, which we are to answer to at this sessions, and to be tried upon."

Thomas Burr. "Our all is at stake; we perceive the recorder is determined concerning us: we must have liberty to speak; we are free-born Englishmen."

Recorder. "We have power here to tender you the oath, without taking notice of any other cause."

George Whitehead. "It is preposterous to run us upon the oath in the first place, we being not committed for that, but for other causes."

Recorder. "You affront the court: is that a fit word to give the court, to charge the court with preposterous proceedings."

George Whitehead. "I do not charge the court; I do distinguish between the recorder in this point, and the court. He seeks to run us upon that first which in course is last, according to his own mittimus and warrant; and is not that preposterous? Let our mittimus be read, and that will show we were not committed upon the oath.

"We ought to have due process or proceeding in due course of law; therefore the court should know how we were first arrested and

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turned into gaol by the sheriff, without examination, mittimus, or warrant; and how afterward had out and committed; and what the mittimus is; what are the premises contained in it, that we are to answer unto.

"The law of England is tender of men's liberties, properties, estates, and lives, all which are concerned in our imprisonment; *lex angliæ* is said to be *lex misericordiæ*, that is, the law of England is a law of mercy; one reason whereof is, that the innocent may not be worn or wasted through long imprisonment, but be brought forth speedily to his trial, according to magna charta," &c.

Recorder. "Look what an argument or consequence you would draw frow hence, the law of England is a law of mercy; it is *lex misericordiæ*, therefore thieves or malefactors, &c. must not be brought to condign punishment," &c.

George Whitehead. "That is none of my consequence; mine is the same that judge Coke doth instance, wherein the law of England is *lex misericordiæ*, in that it is tender of men's liberties and prescribes a due course of procedure." Interrupted.

"Magna charta enjoins, that no freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, &c. but by the law of the land. The law of England requires due

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process from the very first arrest, taking, and imprisoning, to the very end and execution of the same. Therefore the first arrest, imprisoning, and committing us, ought to be known and understood, whether it was in due manner and course of law, yea or nay."

The recorder was much offended at the prisoner, for urging so strongly the reading of their mittimus, and with the justices for acquiescing in their desire.

At length, on George Whitehead still urging the production of this document, the recorder said to him : "No doubt you have a copy ;" on which George Whitehead said he had, and craved the liberty of the court to read it. The justices having queried one of another, and being generally of the mind that it ought to be read, the mayor informed the recorder, that the justices were agreed it should be read, which was accordingly done. *It stated, that the prisoners had assembled together with several other persons, in disturbance of the public peace and against the laws of the realm; and being required to find surties for their respective appearance at the next quarter sessions, which they refused, the keeper of the common gaol was required to receive them, and to keep them until they should be discharged by due order of law.*

George Whitehead urging the charge con-

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tained in the mittimus, viz. that of being at a meeting in disturbance of the public peace—the recorder insisted upon what he called the other mittimus, being read also. George Whitehead pressed the court to try them, in the first instance at least, on their original mittimus, and stated, that they had exceptions against the second warrant which ought to be read if the warrant were. The court agreed that both should be read.

Recorder. "Have you any thing against the oath of allegiance? Or do you except against any thing contained in it."

George Whitehead. "We have nothing to except against the declaration of allegiance contained in it, as to the substance thereof."

Thomas Burr. "We show our allegiance by our conversations, that is, by our living peaceably under the king and government."

Recorder. "Do you scruple any word or thing contained in the oath? If you do, tell us what it is."

George Whitehead. "We both own and can sign the declaration of allegiance, in opposition to the pope and popery; and to those seditious or treasonable practices and positions abjured and renounced by that oath."

Recorder. "Do you hold it unlawful to take an oath in any case?"

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George Whitehead. "We are not committed to prison to answer to questions at sessions; but to answer to the premises contained in our mittimus."

Recorder. "Do you not hold it lawful to tell a lie, that is, an *officious* lie? to prevent an imminent danger," &c.

George Whitehead. "No, by no means; that is not a true Protestant principle, to tell or maintain an *officious* lie, so called."

Recorder. "Will you take the oath? &c. If you will, hold up your hand as a testimony that you do take the oath or swear, that shall serve," &c.

George Whitehead. "We have a protestation or declaration against the pope and popery, which was delivered to the committee of parliament, and thereby judged sufficient to distinguish us from popish recusants: we crave leave of the court to read it."

Recorder. "What difference is there between a protestation and an oath?"

George Whitehead. "It may be a protestation or testimony against popery, yet not an oath. I pray you let us read our protestation, that we may not lie under suspicion without cause."

Court. "You may. Read it."

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The protestation read in court, which followeth.

"A protestation or declaration, to distinguish Protestant dissenters from Popish recusants.

"I, A. B. do, in the presence of Almighty God, solemnly profess and in good conscience declare, it is my real judgment that the Church of Rome is not the real Church of Christ; nor the pope or bishop of Rome, Christ's vicar: and his or their doctrines, of deposing heretical princes and of absolving their subjects of their obedience; of purgatory and prayers for the dead; of indulgences and worshiping of images; of adorning and praying to the Virgin Mary and other saints, deceased; and of transubstantiation, or changing the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, at or after the consecration thereof by any person whatsoever; are false, erroneous, and contrary to the Truth of God declared in the Holy Scriptures: and therefore, that the communion of the said Church is superstitious and idolatrous.

"And I do likewise sincerely testify and declare, that I do from the bottom of my heart, detest and abhor all plots and conspiracies that are, or may be contrived against the king or parliament or people of this realm, or the true Protestant religion therein professed. And I

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do hereby faithfully promise, by God's help, to live a peaceable and sober life, as becometh a good Christian and protestant to do.

"And all this I do acknowledge, intend, declare, and subscribe, without any equivocation or mental reservation; according to the true plainness, simplicity, and usual significations of the words.

"Witness my hand."

George Whitehead. "This was accepted by a great committee and entered in the journal of parliament, in order to distinguish us from popish recusants," &c.

Recorder. "We have not a law to accept it: it is not enacted or made a law. We must proceed according to law, &c. You seem to declare for the true Protestant religion, &c. when you dissent from the Church of England; I am not in that point satisfied with your declaration."

George Whitehead. "We have no mental reservation in the case. We are willing and ready to sign this declaration. Is there any evidence against us, to prove the premises contained in our mittimus? Where are our accusers?

Recorder. "The premises; what are they?

George Whitehead. "The being at an un-

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lawful assembly in disturbance of the public peace, as is pretended against us; let us be tried, and either condemned or acquitted hereupon."

Recorder. "I was more favourable to you than you deserved; for I could have drawn an indictment against you at common law, and brought you to a trial upon it; which being found against you I must have fined you.

"We who are in commission for the peace are *lex loquens*, and to give the true meaning of the law. We are not to make laws, but to interpret the law. We are to punish or amerce offenders, secundum qualitatem and secundum quantitatem delicti," &c.

George Whitehead. "We are not at present about to justify ourselves as to matter of fact; we are willing to hear evidence what any can prove against us, in relation to our assemblies. Let us have due process."

Recorder. "If the court will agree to it, we will adjourn. And I will provide an indictment, and give order that the witnesses shall be here, and will give it to the grand inquest; and if they find it against you, you shall be fined forty pounds and imprisonment till paid," &c.

Prisoner. "It seems the witnesses are yet to procure. Is there any here that can give evi-

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dence against our meeting, of the breach of the peace," &c.

Recorder. "That is a lie; I did not say I would procure witnesses: that is scandalous."

Thomas Burr. "We desire that no advantage may be taken against us for a word. You ought not to take advantage," &c.

George Whitehead. "I intended no offence in the word *procure*; I intended it not in the worst sense, that is, as by way of subornation; for I intended no other than according to the recorder's own words, that witnesses should be here, or the like, which doubtless many present heard."

Recorder. "You shall have the oath put to you, and I will tell you what danger you incur: if you refuse to take it, you are to be put out of the king's protection, your lands and estates forfeit to the king, and your bodies imprisoned during the king's pleasure," &c.

George Whitehead. "We understand what a premunire means, according to the statute of premunire, made in the sixteenth year of king Richard the Second; though there is no equity that should be brought upon us, whilst we practise our allegiance. Suppose we cannot for conscience' sake swear, it is but hard measure to bring us under the penalty of premunire for that cause only. What equity can there be

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in it? seeing we utterly deny the pope and popery, &c.; to which we may justly add, and abhor those treasonable practices and positions, which are abjured by that oath. Can it be equal or just to run us to a premunire, to forfeit our estates, liberties, &c. only for want of swearing? How can that be either secundum qualitatem, or secundum quantitatem delicti?"

Recorder. "You talk of conscience. Friend, friend, let me ask you one question: pray what is conscience?"

George Whitehead. "It is that knowledge that God hath placed in man; it is a knowing together between God and our own souls, by virtue of the law of God in man; whereby he knows what is good and what is evil, and whereby he is taught to embrace the good and shun the evil. It is called, the law of truth, the law of equity, the law of reason, &c. against which law, says the law book 'Doctor and Student,' no law nor custom ought to be brought, but is void."

Recorder. "Although I asked you a question, I did not bid you preach upon it. But conscience may be seared; as when men will not be reclaimed, but have their own wills be they never so contrary."

George Whitehead. "It is true; some men's consciences become hardened and seared through

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sinning, and for want of being exercised by that law of God in them. Yet there is a universal law of truth in mankind, whereby even the wicked and those of seared and hardened consciences, shall finally be convicted and awakened in torment," &c.

Recorder. "You must have the oath put to you; the court must tender you the oath of allegiance; will you take it?" &c.

George Whitehead. "We lie under a charge in our mittimus; let us be discharged of that first: that contains the premises which we are to answer to; let us not be hood-winked. Are we discharged of the two warrants that are against us, yea or no? The rest of the court ought to know, that one thing may not confound another."

Recorder. "You talk law as you talk Gospel; here you talk a little, and there you talk a little. It is pity you have the benefit of the law; you put yourselves from the protection of the law."

George Whitehead. "The recorder is a party against us; he is our accuser, prosecutor, and judge. He inveighs against us; he is determined against us; he has told his resolution aforehand," &c.

One justice: "You offer contempt against

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the king in what you say against his minister; the recorder is his minister."

George Whitehead. "No such matter; I only oppose an undue and irregular procedure, which is not the king's will," &c.

Recorder. "Your words tend to stir up the people here to sedition."

George Whitehead. "We have no such design; we only plead our own rights as Englishmen: the losers must have leave to speak; our liberties, and estates, and families are concerned; our wives and families suffer by our restraint," &c.

Recorder. "Clerk, tender him the oath; offer him the book."

Clerk reads: "I George Whitehead do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify, and declare in my conscience," &c.

George Whitehead. "Forbear; we have matter of plea which ought to be heard first," &c.

Note. Here a great noise was made by some present.

Crier. "O yes! silence in the court," &c.

George Whitehead. "We beg of the court that we may not be thus run upon, but duly heard upon the process we suffer under."

Recorder. "Will you take the oath? answer

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and then you shall know the pleasure of the court."

George Whitehead. "We ought to be at some certainty, whether we are discharged of the premises laid against us in the two warrants. The recorder was even now for indicting us at common law; now he is all in haste to put the oath upon us. Thus he appears inconsistent with himself: he is not now *lex loquens* to be sure; for the law speaking doth not contradict itself. He is not the mouth of the law, in running thus unduely and abruptly upon us with the oath, to evade the premises which we were to answer to. Are we discharged of the two warrants, yea or no? let us have the plain advice or sense of the court."

Recorder. "It may be you may suppose you be discharged; what is the consequence you will infer thence."

George Whitehead. "We desire a plain answer; we are not to be answered by supposition, nor thence to draw consequences now: we are not called hither to dispute upon an hypothetical argument; we expect a positive plain answer, and the sense of the court concerning our mittimus and warrant: are we discharged of them or not?"

Some of the court to the recorder: "Let them be discharged of them."

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Some of the court: "You are discharged of them."

George Whitehead. "Does the recorder say so? Does he assent to it? Let proclamation be made of it then, that we may be set at liberty in the same capacity we were in before we were first arrested."

Recorder. "No, no; seeing you will take your way I will take my way; you shall have the oath first and then your discharge. Will you take the oath, and then you shall be discharged? What say you to it? Read the oath," &c.

Thomas Burr. "It is a force put upon us; it is very hard dealing we may not be duly heard," &c.

George Whitehead. "Are the rest of the justices of the same mind, that we should be thus run upon? We hope you are not all of the same mind with the recorder in this proceeding. He is engaged against us; he is resolved to make something of it, and to make us exemplary in suffering."

Recorder. "Stop his mouth; take him away. They had not only need to have their hats pulled off, but their mouths stopt also."

George Whitehead. "Pray hear us; we have more to offer as about this tender of the oath, to show how undue it is, if you will but suffer the

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law to be read which we desire. But we ought first to have had proclamation made of our discharge from the two warrants."

Recorder. "If we should make proclamation and let you go, we should be laughed at: no, no; I see you lay upon the catch, we will not discharge you. Now we have you here we shall not let you go, for to send a warrant after you to fetch you again. Will you take the oath or not?"

George Whitehead. "Is this intended for a first tender or a second? We desire an answer."

Recorder. "We will tender it you *de novo*; it shall be for a first tender; and if you will not take it, you shall be committed till next sessions," &c.

Clerk reads the oath.

Clerk. "I, Thomas Burr, do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify, and declare in my conscience," &c.

George Whitehead. "We appeal to the mayor and the rest of the justices. The recorder is a party against us; he has determined against us beforehand: I will prove that he is no competent judge in our case, if I may be heard."—Interruption.—"Are we discharged of the two warrants? Pray let us have fair and plain dealing; do not thus force upon us; it is unfair and undue proceeding. Let us be dis-

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charged of the two warrants first, before we be put upon an answer : we ought not to be put to our answer, but upon due process," &c.

Some of the court. "You are discharged from those two mittimusses. Clerk, read their discharge." The clerk reads what the recorder had caused him to enter into the book to this purpose.

Clerk. "George Whitehead and Thomas Burr are discharged of the matter contained in their two mittimusses. And the oath of allegiance, and the Testament to swear in open court, at this present sessions, was severally tendered to them ; and the said George Whitehead and Thomas Burr, having severally refused to take the said oath of allegiance, it is therefore ordered, that the said George Whitehead and Thomas Burr be committed to the common gaol of the said city, there to remain without bail or mainprize until the next quarter sessions," &c.

George Whitehead. "The latter part is not true ; we have not yet refused the oath ; we were not duly nor regularly brought upon that point as to give a positive answer, because of the other precedent charges which we were to answer to. We have yet matter of plea about the tender of the oath, *de novo*, in court. We request further time to be heard upon an ad-

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journment, before we give our positive answer. We desire to know upon what law or statute it is tendered?" No answer was given to this question.

Recorder. "You have stronger lungs than I; I understand you had a feast last night, &c. Adjourn the court; take them away gaoler."

George Whitehead. "Pray let us have more time to consider and speak to this point. I intreat that I may have leave to read the clause in the statute, that concerns the tender of the oath."

These endeavours of the prisoners to be heard, after the pretended order was entered, was, because the prisoners did not believe that the justices, or greater number of them, did concur with the recorder's proceeding against them; but that they had more both of moderation and justice in them, and that he carried things on too much over their heads; and all to run down and ensnare the prisoners, to oppress them and continue them under suffering.

Officers. "The court adjourned."

George Whitehead held by the bar, pressing to be further heard after the adjournment, when the court met again, and for the statute to be read about the oath; neither whereof would be granted the prisoners, but two of the keepers pulled the prisoner away.

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Prisoner. "Take notice that we have not yet refused the oath, being not duly nor regularly brought upon that point; but we have owned the declaration of allegiance contained in it, and do still freely assent to it, in opposition to and abhorrence of all those treasonable practices, positions, and principles abjured and renounced by that oath; though we are conscientiously afraid to swear it, only with respect to Christ's prohibition in the case of swearing."

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SECTION XIV.

George Whitehead and Thomas Burr re-conveyed to prison—released at the next quarter sessions.—Distinction between the refusal of Friends to take the oath and that of the Papists.—Change in the sentiments of parliament respecting the persecution of dissenting protestants.—Bills for the relief of dissenters.—Character of informers.—Petition to the king.—A discourse with him.—G. Whitehead labours in the ministry and shares in the sufferings of his Friends.

After this manly and Christian defence of their civil and religious rights, being re-conveyed to prison, George Whitehead and his companions addressed a letter to the mayor and aldermen of the city, acknowledging the impartiality and moderation with which they had been treated on their trial; but at the same time respectfully urging the illegality of the proceeding, in the tendering of the oath to them, *de novo;* and requesting a hearing in their council chamber, or to be brought before the adjournment of the court. Notwithstanding the favourable disposition of the magistrates, and that the recorder, five days after their trial, had been voted out of place by the common council,

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their discharge was not effected until the time of the next regular sessions; when no charge being exhibited against them, they were ordered to be released.

The earl of Yarmouth and several other persons of eminence interfered in their favour; from which, as well as from the conduct of the magistrates, it may be inferred that some change in public opinion, probably both as regarded the character of the Quakers and the nature of persecution, had taken place.

It must also be admitted, that some change had taken place in the manner of George Whitehead's treating those who differed from him; and that, without any diminution of the sincerity and piety which marked the early period of his life, there was an evident increase of that conciliatory spirit, which is the usual accompaniment of mature wisdom. He has left very copious remarks on the proceedings in this case;* and whilst they have lost much of their interest, by the happy change in the laws, as well as, we trust, in the disposition of the people respecting persecution, the following

* George Whitehead published at the time a very particular account of the trial, under the title of "Due order of Law and Justice, pleaded against irregular and arbitrary Proceedings. Published for information and caution, on the behalf of true Protestants and Englishmen's birthrights." *Editor.*

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passages, in which he draws the distinction between the case of the Papists and the Quakers in regard to the refusal of the oath of allegiance, may be worthy of insertion; as showing the views taken by the Society, in relation to the political duties of its members.

Our case, says he, vastly differs from theirs for whom the oath was intended; there is no parity between our case and theirs. We conscientiously scruple or fear to take that oath, as we do all oaths, viz. because it is an oath; not because of the declaration therein contained, of such duty and allegiance as every true and well-affected subject ought to bear to the king; nor yet because of the testimony or declaration therein against the pope, his pretended power, excommunications, absolutions, &c. damnable positions, &c. therein mentioned; for that declaration and testimony therein contained, for fidelity to the king and against the pope, &c. we can freely sign, as we have delivered a declaration to that purpose to the late long parliament, and in some points containing a more full protestation against popery, in the most erroneous, idolatrous, and superstitious doctrines thereof; which declaration was accepted by a large committee of parliament, as sufficient to distinguish us from Papists, and

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entered into the journal of the house of Commons. And therefore the substance of the declaration of allegiance, contained in the oath of allegiance, we cannot oppugn, but own, as it is or may be transferred or intended on behalf of the present king, in opposition to those treasonable practices and principles thereby renounced and abjured; as being persuaded in conscience, that he was eminently preserved and restored by the hand of Divine Providence, to have actual power and dominion in this realm and all other his countries, knowing that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of men and that they are at his disposal.

And we also believe, that in good conscience we are bound to demean ourselves honestly, and to live as peaceable minded Christians and true protestant subjects under the king and his government, giving to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's. And then our solemn and serious protestation is against the pope as antichristian, and against those popish principles, wicked positions and practices, viz.

Of deposing or murdering kings and princes excommunicated by the pope.

Of disposing of their kingdoms, dominions, and countries.

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Of authorizing foreign princes to invade and annoy them.

Of absolving subjects from their allegiance and obedience.

Of licensing any of them to bear arms, raise tumults, or offer violence or hurt to their lawful kings, princes, governments, or subjects.

Of treasons, traiterous conspiracies, and hellish plots against king, government, parliament, or people.

Of that damnable position, that princes that be excommunicated or deprived by the pope, may be deposed by their subjects or any other.

All which destructive principles and abominable practices, together with that antichristian spirit from whence they proceed, we do in good conscience and in the sight and presence of God who knows our hearts, utterly abhor, protest, and testify against; and therefore do neither refuse nor scruple the said oath in favour to these or any such principles.

What is now wanting that we must be run to premunire, to lose our estates and liberties? Is a peaceable conversation wanting on our parts? No. Is the duty of allegiance towards our king wanting? No. Are we infected with popish, treacherous, treasonable, or destructive principles against our king, or his government or people? No; God knows the innocency of

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our hearts and intentions, and men know our peaceable conversations. What then is the matter, that we must be so severely dealt withal, to the uttermost rigour of the law, to be deprived of all outward liberties, properties, estates, livelihoods, and all our outward comforts in this world? Are we guilty of any such essential offence or capital crime, in our not coming under the circumstance of an oath, as may justly and naturally merit such severity? No, surely. The case is brought to a near point, and reduced to a very narrow compass.

An innocent, honest, quiet, and well meaning man, both towards the king, his government, and people; he is truly principled in his duty; he is real and honest in his heart towards his protestant prince; he is a real protestant against the pope and all popish antichristian positions and destructive practices; he not only performs his duty of allegiance in his peaceable conversation, but also declares it in the sight of God and men, and is willing to sign and subscribe such declaration of his duty of allegiance, if he may not otherwise be believed; only he conscientiously scruples to say, I swear, and to kiss the book, to make his declaration an oath; for want only of which circumstance and ceremony, this poor innocent man and sincere protestant must be run to a premunire, his

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liberty lost, and the little estate or substance he has must be forfeited and all taken from him; his poor wife and small children left desolate, wholly impoverished and want bread; his wife must go mourning and wringing her hands, and shedding of tears night and day, for the hard measure she has met withal, and her children dolefully crying and mourning for want of bread!

Where is now either conscience, equity, reason, justice, or mercy? Were it not very inhuman thus to destroy innocent and harmless protestants, and thereby gratify the popish spirit and party, merely because such protestants are afraid of an oath? they dare not swear. And how is the real intent and end of the law answered, by such severe and inhuman dealing with innocent protestants; who never were impeached nor justly chargeable either with treasonable attempts, principles, or practices? They cannot be detected either in actual treason, or in being infected with any treasonable principles by any of their teachers or others; and therefore, no such persons or people as those laws of premunire were really intended against, though such can escape them. We can appeal to God, angels, and all just impartial men this is our case; we are not the people which, in point of equity or justice, the

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law could ever be intended against; we are of no such destructive principles or practices, as either the nature of the oath points at and intends, or the statute of premunire, 16 R. 2, c. 5, was provided against; unto which statute both that of the third of king James, c. 4, and seventh of king James, c. 6, do refer, for the penalty of a premunire upon persons refusing to swear to the declaration of their allegiance. Let that of 16 R. 2, c. 5, be considered, as to the nature and intent thereof.

George Whitehead thus continues his narrative.

It was very observable, that, before the dissolution of that long parliament in king Charles the Second's reign, which made sundry acts against us, there was a great alteration in its disposition, being much turned against persecuting dissenting protestants, especially by those laws made against popish recusants; and there was certainly an overruling power and hand of the Lord God in that alteration and change of the spirit of that parliament, to compassion rather than persecution. He that standeth in the congregation of the mighty, and judgeth among the gods, did certainly judge and plead for the cause of the innocent sufferers under the great and long persecutions that had been upon them.

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And it was also remarkable, that some time before the said long parliament was dissolved, many of our old adversaries and rigid persecutors therein were removed by death, and new members of better spirits and tempers chosen in their stead; insomuch that before that parliament was ended, it was so changed that it appeared almost like a new house of commons.

After which, the ensuing parliaments appeared more and more considerate, and inclined to moderation and charity towards dissenting protestants; and such were we esteemed, being publicly manifest by our plain testimony against popery. For towards the conclusion of the aforesaid long parliament, which was so much altered for the better by new elections, &c. a grand committee of the whole house was appointed, to enquire into the case of the Quakers suffering by those old laws made against popish recusants, in the reigns of queen Elizabeth and king James the first. Divers of us appeared before that committee, among whom were William Mead, William Penn, * myself, with some

* The attention of the parliament, was drawn to the consideration of the discrimination of Protestant dissenters in general from Papists, and William Penn presented petitions to both houses, praying that in the discriminating clause, the solemn declaration of a Quaker might be taken instead of his oath.

Two speeches of his before the committee on this occasion are

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others; and two things were inquired of us, or which we were to inform the said committee of.

1. If we owned ourselves to be protestant dissenters?

2. How we suffered by laws made against popish recusants?

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preserved, in which he strongly denied the imputation of popery, and at the same time dared to speak his mind as to the error of persecuting any persons *whatever* for their conscientious belief. The following passages from his speeches may probably be agreeable to the reader.

After speaking of the abuse which had been heaped upon himself particularly, as a papist, and even as an emissary from Rome and in pay from the pope, he says: "Nay, some zealots for the Protestant religion have been so far gone in this mistake, as not only to think ill of us and decline our conversation, but to take courage to themselves to prosecute us for a sort of concealed Papists; and the truth is, that what with one thing and what with another, we have been as the wool-sacks and common whipping stock of the kingdon. All laws have been let loose upon us, as if the design were not to *reform* but to *destroy* us; and this not for what we *are*, but for what we are *not*. It is hard that we must thus bear the stripes of another interest, and be their proxy in punishment. But mark! I would not be mistaken; I am far from thinking it fit, because I exclaim against the injustice of whipping Quakers for Papists, that Papists should be whipped for their consciences. No; for though the hand pretended to be lifted up against them hath, I know not by what discretion, lighted heavily upon us; and we complain; yet we do not mean that any should take a fresh aim at them, or that they should come in our room; for we must give the liberty we ask, and cannot be false to our principles, though it were to

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In both which we fully satisfied the committee, and our case was generally considered unjust as well as illegal; since we suffered as popish recusants, when we were manifest to be real protestants, and the papists were indulged and went free; though for our parts we envied not their liberty, although we deeply suffered in their stead.

It was very remarkable, that while our persecutors were persecuting us upon the Conven-

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relieve ourselves; for we have good will to all men, and would have none suffer for a truly sober and conscientious dissent on any hand."

Towards the conclusion he says: "I do here solemnly declare, in the presence of Almighty God, and before you all, that the profession I now make and the Society I now adhere to, have been so far from altering that protestant judgment I had, that I am not conscious to myself, of having receded from an *iota* of any one principle, maintained by those first protestants and reformers of Germany, and our own martyrs at home, against the see of Rome. On the contrary, I do with great truth assure you, that we are of the same negative faith with the ancient Protestant Church; and upon occasion shall be ready, by God's assistance, to make it appear, that we are of the same belief as to the most fundamental articles of her creed too; and therefore it is we think it hard, that though we deny, in common with her, those doctrines of Rome so strenuously *protested* against, whence the name Protestants, we should be so unhappy as to suffer, and that with extreme severity, by those very laws on purpose made against the maintainers of those doctrines which we so deny." *Clarkson's Life of W. Penn, vol.* 1, *page* 221. *Editor.*

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ticle Act, and statutes made against popish recusants, and unjustly aspersing our religious assemblies, as being seditious conventicles and very dangerous to plot and contrive insurrections, &c.; about that very time, discovery was made of the popish plot.

This plot being strictly inquired into by the commons in parliament, great information was given about it; and in the address of both houses of parliament to the king, complaint was made against the conspirators in these words, viz. "A popish party, who have not only plotted and intended the destruction of your majesty's royal person, but the total subversion of the government and true religion established among us," &c.

From which it may be observed, that it was not in any of the Quakers' meetings, nor in the meetings of any other dissenting protestants, that this conspiracy or plot was found; but among a popish party. How unjust was it therefore, so severely to persecute the people called Quakers, and violently to interrupt their religious meetings, under pretence of being seditious and dangerous to plot and contrive insurrections, to imprison their persons, to fine them, and often to spoil their goods? And not only to treat them thus, but to prosecute them upon those laws made against popish recusants

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and not against innocent protestants; even whilst, as it is said, "this restless party (meaning of papists) not content with the great liberty they had a long time enjoyed, to exercise their own religion privately among themselves, to partake of an equal freedom of their persons and estates with your majesty's protestant subjects, and of an advantage above them in being excused from chargeable offices and employments," &c. So that it then appeared to the parliament, that the papists escaped the penalties of those old laws made against them, for their absence from their parish churches, much more than the people called Quakers could, who deeply suffered thereby.

After the discovery of the said popish plot, and the impeachment, trial, and condemnation of William Lord Viscount Stafford, in December, 1680, the parliament thought it very necessary to consider and provide some means to increase the interest of all protestants, and strengthen and unite them in interest and affection, for the better security of the kingdom and government; which had been long weakened and greatly injured by persecution.

Then the parliament bethought themselves of preparing and bringing in a bill for dissenting protestants. In the votes of the house of com-

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mons, the 16th day of December, 1680, there is this, viz.

"A bill for exempting his majesty's protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England, from the penalties of certain laws, was read the first time."

This bill was read a second time and it was "resolved, that the said bill be committed upon the debate of the house, to the committee to whom the bill for uniting his majesty's protestant subjects is committed upon the debate of the house."

Divers Friends attended the committee some considerable time that winter, about the said bill, both early and late; desiring that it might be made effectual for our just liberty and freedom from persecution, and clear from all clauses and provisoes which might in any way be a snare to us, or contrary to our tender consciences; and to answer the end intended both by the title and preamble; the title being, "A bill of ease to all protestant dissenters;" and the preamble thus: "Forasmuch as some ease to tender consciences in the exercise of religion, may be an effectual means to unite his majesty's protestant subjects in interest and affection, which is highly necessary in this time of imminent danger from the common enemy the papists, be it enacted," &c.

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Which bill contained divers clauses which are in the act of the first of king William the Third, for exempting protestant dissenters from the Church of England, from the penalties of certain laws, that is, of those made against popish recusants and conventicles, whereby we the said people chiefly suffered; and also in the said bill this special exemption was made in our favour, viz.

"And whereas there are certain other persons, dissenters from the Church of England, which scruple taking any oath.

"Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every such person shall make and subscribe the aforesaid declaration, and also this declaration of allegiance following," &c.

The first being the declaration mentioned in a statute, made in the twentieth year of king Charles the Second, entitled, "An act to prevent papists from sitting in either house of parliament."

The second being the declaration of allegiance, without taking the oath; which divers Friends have formerly proffered, being willing to sign the declaration without swearing to it, or using any of the words which render it an oath, as I swear, this oath, &c. or the final imprecation of, "so help me God," which more fully makes it an oath, together with kissing the book.

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As we were to be exempted from these, we esteemed it a favour then intended us; though it could not in that parliament and reign of king Charles the Second, be brought into an act; yet there was some honest and good beginning, which afterward, in the reign of king William the Third, upon more mature deliberation was made more effectual.

The chairman of that committee which sat upon the said bill was the lord Finch, since earl of Nottingham, who then appeared favourable and friendly to us; and for promoting the said bill into an act, if it could have been in that parliament; and to some of us since that, he has positively declared his opinion to be for toleration, without which neither we nor their church are safe.

In the said committee we met with some interruption, by two or three members who were favourers of the Presbyterians and Independents' societies; they offering terms of the ease intended in the said bill, in behalf of their friends the Presbyterians and Independents, which we the people called Quakers could not assent to, namely, the taking the oaths of supremacy and allegiance. And if they had gotten what they offered inserted in the bill or act, as terms of ease to dissenting protestants, we well knew we should have been excluded and still

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exposed to persecution and sufferings. I was indeed burdened when they made such an offer, because I was sensible it tended to the injury of many other conscientious protestant dissenters.

Wherefore on the same occasion I quickly went both to colonel Birch and alderman Love, and cleared my conscience to them against what they had offered; knowing it would be very uneasy to truly conscientious dissenters, to have the oath of supremacy imposed upon them; and thereby to swear, that they utterly declare and testify in their conscience, that the king's highness is the only supreme governor of this realm, &c. as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things, or cases, as temporal, &c. How to reconcile with this oath, their dissenting in spiritual or ecclesiastical matters from the Church of England, I knew not, neither did I find they could tell or demonstrate; nor how they could promise, that to their power they would assist and defend all jurisdictions, privileges, pre-eminences, and authorities granted or belonging to the king, his heirs and successors, or united and annexed to the imperial crown of this realm.

I did both seriously and tenderly clear my conscience in the matter to them; for I wished well to the men. After all our endeavours to have the said bill of ease passed with safety into an act, and our attendance on that parliament, the king's dissolving the same prevented it.

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One circumstance I took particular notice of: one night when we were attending the said committee, Sir Christopher Musgrave came and complained to the committee, against the severe usage of many of our Friends; telling the committee the prisons were filled with them, and how many for small matters were excommunicated and imprisoned; and what a shame and scandal it was to their Church, to use the Quakers so hardly for such small matters, &c.; or to the same effect.

I little expected he would have then appeared openly an advocate so far for our suffering Friends, being a person who professed much zeal for their Church; yet he saw it was not for its honour, to be guilty of such severe persecution.

Although that parliament did not pass the act intended for the ease of protestant dissenters, yet before their dissolution they passed a vote against persecution.

It was resolved in the house of commons: "That it is the opinion of this house, that the prosecution of protestant dissenters upon the penal laws, * is at this time grievous to the sub-

* Although these laws were originally designed against the Papists, yet all persons who did not go to church and did not receive the sacrament once a year, were liable to their penalties. *Editor.*

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ject, a weakening of the protestant interest, an encouragement to popery, and dangerous to the peace of the kingdom."

Being sensible the Lord was pleased to open the eyes of the parliament, to see what a popish design it was, for a protestant church, so called, to persecute protestants; we were the more concerned at that time to attend the parliament, and to encourage their endeavours against persecution; to frustrate the design of popery, which is persecution and violent coercion. The zeal then stirring in the government against the same, deserved to be countenanced, though it had not the desired effect.

However just and good motions and endeavours, may for a time be overruled and frustrated, they will in time revive and break forth again, and be made to take effect by a Divine overruling Power and Providence, as has in our days appeared. Thanks be to God, who has opened the eyes of the government on sundry occasions, especially in latter times, against popery and persecution, which are both one in nature and ground: for persecution for conscience is popery, whatever church, people, or profession are for it or abet it; they are drunk and blind, and shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.

Another instance of the parliament's design

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to remove persecution, was the passing a bill in both houses, entitled, "An act for the repeal of a statute made in the 35th year of the reign of queen Elizabeth;" and taking notice thereof in the ensuing parliament at Oxford, in the vote of 24 die martii, 1680–81, that it was not presented to his majesty, as the rest of the bills were, for his royal assent. And also it was resolved, that the house would next day take into consideration, by what means the said bill miscarried.

According to which order, in the next day's votes it is declared:

"That the house took into consideration, the matter relating to the bill which passed both houses in the last parliament, entitled, an act for the repeal of a statute made in the 35th year of the reign of queen Elizabeth; but was not tendered to his majesty for his royal assent.*

How this bill came to miscarry we did not hear; whether designedly mislaid or stolen, was questioned. It was pity it was not presented and passed, as both parliaments desired, viz. that in 1680 at Westminster, and that at Oxford

* Burnet says: "On the day of the prorogation, the bill ought to have been offered to the king; but the clerk of the crown, by the king's particular order, withdrew the bill. The king had no mind openly to deny it, but he had less mind to pass it." *Editor.*

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1681. For if the said statute of the 35th of queen Elizabeth had been utterly repealed, it had given a blow to the design of persecution and popery, which is greatly strengthened thereby; it being a president and plea for the popish church to use their most severe persecution against protestants, even unto death, for their religion and dissent from the Church of Rome. The said statute of the 35th of queen Elizabeth being a sanguinary law, to force dissenters to abjure the realm upon pain of death; and in her days several were put to death.

And there appears as much reason that that severe and sanguinary law should be disannulled and abrogated, as there was for the utter abolishment of the writ, *de hæretico comburendo*, and all proceedings thereupon, with all punishment by death in pursuance of any ecclesiastical censures; which were so abolished by the statute of the 29th Car. 2. ch. 9.

For as the popish hierarchy and governments unjustly turned the execution of the said writ against the protestant martyrs, so they were as likely to turn the said statute of queen Elizabeth 35, against the protestant dissenters; and there was the same reason for the repealing of one as the other.

However, it was a mercy of God to the nation, to raise up a contrary spirit to that of

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persecution in the parliament in those days. And yet that furious spirit remained among many of the clergy, and the irreligious followers and members of their church, who were still watching for opportunities to renew persecution against honest innocent people, especially against us, and to enforce a conformity in church and worship with them, contrary to our consciences; we being under a Divine obligation to worship God in spirit and truth, and not in human traditions, after the commandments, doctrines, or precepts of men.

It is true we had some times of respite and ease from severe persecutions in those days, upon the king's said declaration for liberty to tender consciences; yet those times were but short, in comparison of the long continuance of those renewed persecutions which we suffered in those days.

Informers, like beasts of prey, were lurking, creeping, and sculking about in many or most parts of the nation, where our Friends had meetings for the worship of God; being encouraged by those of the clergy and persecuting magistrates, who esteemed them useful servants of their church * to enforce conformity, though

* William Crouch and I, anno 1683, having some discourse with Dr. Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, at his palace at

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without conviction of conscience. Several of the priests also turning informers and assisting to disturb our religious meetings in divers places; all which ministered encouragement to such vile persons, in their unchristian and destructive work against innocent families and people.

Some of the priests even pleaded for and preached up coercion in matters of religion, from those texts, *Ezra* vii. 26, and *Rom.* xiii. 1, 2; though miserably perverted when applied to uphold persecution for matters of conscience, comparing both texts with the decree of Artaxerxes king of Persia, and the great encouragement and liberty of conscience which he granted, and gave to Ezra and Israel, with respect to the worship and service of their God according to their religion; as fully appears in the same chapter.

If an emperor, king, or chief ruler be a papist

Lambeth, about the great sufferings of our Friends by informers, and I telling him what wicked persons they were, and that many of them had forsworn themselves, and deserved to be indicted for perjury; and what a dishonour it was to their Church, to employ such agents to force people to a conformity by persecution and spoil, &c. to excuse them his answer was: "There must be some crooked timber used in building a ship," or "A ship cannot be built without some crooked timber in it." Was not this a learned and apt comparison, to show what sort of timber must needs help to build and support their Church!

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or an idolater, and would force me to be of his religion, or conform to his way and manner of worship, upon some great penalties or pains, even of death itself; I must not therefore comply with him or be subject to his will therein, if I be a true Christian, but stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ hath set me free; or otherwise I should fall under miserable bondage, and lose my inward peace with God. And then what good would all the world do me? I would rather make Moses's choice, to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short season; and at last end in tribulation and anguish of soul.

It was observable, that when the informers were let loose and countenanced by authority against us, they generally sought more after our estates than the confinement of our persons, because imprisonment would not be their gain; although many of our Friends remained in prisons, as appears by the following petition.

To the King.

The humble petition of above a thousand prisoners, commonly called Quakers,

Showeth:

That our renewed hardships, our continued and increasing imprisonments, do occasion this our humble complaint and request; of which we intreat the king's

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favourable acceptance and tender resentments. We do solemnly declare, that we know no other cause for our strait confinements and hard usage, then what concerns our tender consciences, in serving and worshiping Almighty God that made us; being well known to be persons of quiet conversation and peaceable behaviour, and clear in the sight of God of all seditious contrivances, plots, and conspiracies, and are not evilly affected towards the king's person or government. Howbeit, several gaols are filled, without regard to sex, age, or condition, not only to the impairing our healths, but endangering many of our lives; many having already died prisoners, the greatest part of late committed for our peaceable religious meetings; many of us under fines for that account, and upon the act of 13 and 14 Car. 2. c. 1, extending also to banishment. In some gaols, many of us crowded in nasty holes and mixed among felons; many under sentence of premunire, not for refusing fidelity or allegiance to the king, but only not swearing the same for conscience' sake; many under sentence of excommunication, committed on writs of excom. cap. &c. for nonconformity, &c. and have undergone long and tedious imprisonments. By which confinements and hardships, many innocent and industrious families are left destitute and in distress; many honest tradesmen, husbandmen, and farmers, greatly discouraged and spoiled in their trades and livelihoods; and many poor families depending on them for employment, now for lack thereof exposed to great penury and want. Besides the violence and woful spoil made upon many, both in city and country, by informers, persecutions, &c.; and for twenty pounds a month, and two-thirds of estates seized into the king's hands, &c.; which will unavoidably force many to shut up shops and leave off their trades and farms, &c. (as some have done already) if not timely relieved.

We therefore, who are concerned in the sufferings

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aforesaid, do in all Christian humility request, that the king in his princely compassion, will please to take our distressed case into his tender consideration, and afford us relief from these hardships and imprisonments, as he hath formerly done for many of our suffering Friends, which we do thankfully acknowledge; we being sincerely desirous, by the grace of God, to live peaceably and inoffensively under the king and his government.

Wherefore, according as our conversations are found concurring with this our solemn profession, we humbly crave liberty, that we may provide for our distressed families, and be capable of rendering to Cæsar those things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's; according to our Christian principle and persuasion.

We did not only in this manner labour to influence the king with a sense of the general case of our Friends' sufferings, but also were very free and desirous to give him particular and plain instances thereof; in which concern I was many times very free to appear before the king himself; especially when desired to assist such Friends as were concerned for the sufferers, when they have come to London to apply to him in their behalf; and also when we have had certain accounts of great oppressions sent from several parts of the nation, I have been stirred in spirit and desirous to acquaint the king therewith; that he might be inexcusable, and not plead ignorance of the miseries of those his innocent subjects.

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In my appearing before the king and council, as by the following account, our Friends Lawrence Steel and Charles Jones, jun. of Bristol, were with me; being come to London on purpose to seek relief or some ease for our Friends, who were then closely confined and crowded in prison in that city.*

Being willing to assist them what I could in solicitation, as I was deeply and compassionately affected toward our said Friends, I acquainted some of the lords of the privy council, as prince Rupert, the lord president, and lord chancellor with the case; and desired we might be heard

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* In this time of persecution (1682) Bristol was almost pre-eminent in suffering. The meetings of Friends were disturbed in the most brutal manner; and by the proceedings against them many families were ruined. So many also were committed to prison, that at length there was no more room in the gaols. About fifty persons were crowded into one room, which was so nasty that one of the aldermen said: "If he had a dog which he loved, he would not put him there." Four physicians of Bristol signed a certificate, declaring that the closeness of the prisoners' confinement and their want of room for rest, was in danger of inducing infectious distempers. The sheriff, however, who was the main actor in the persecution, disregarded all representations; and there appears to have been but little commisseration excited in the public mind, in behalf of the poor Quakers. So desperately wicked was the gaoler, that when the prisoners complained for want of room, he said to his man, if he could but shut the door it would be well enough.—See *Sewel.*

Editor.

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before the king and council the following council day, which was granted us. Prince Rupert and the lord president appeared most compassionate and tender toward our Friends, when they understood the extremity of their sufferings; and the lord chancellor moderate.

The substance of passages discoursed before the king and council, relating to the extreme sufferings of the people called Quakers, in the city of Bristol. George Whitehead, Lawrence Steel, and Charles Jones, jun. being called in before the king and council, the 17th of the 12th month, 1681—2.

Some question arising about taking off their hats, the clerk of the council, Sir Thomas Doleman, came to the door to take them off, but was forbidden, it was said by the king; so they were concluded to come in before the king and council with their hats on; which they did accordingly.

Some present said: "Go up to the king;" being at the head of the board.

George Whitehead then went nearer the king.

George Whitehead's introductory request.

"That our complaint and suffering case may be heard and considered abstractedly from those religious circumstances we are under, which

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may seem disgustful to you, that we may have justice done us.

"These persons, Lawrence Steel and Charles Jones, jun. are come from Bristol, on purpose to seek relief of the king from the hard usage our Friends suffer under in that city, beyond the severity of the law, as we conceive.

"They are able to speak to matters of fact, from their own knowledge, how our Friends are used; we intreat the king that they may be heard; and for matter of law, we shall leave that for you to judge of."

One in council. "What reason have we to believe their words against other men's oaths, who are sworn for the king?"

George Whitehead. "We intreat that they may be heard, to give their accounts on those particulars complained of in our petition, which is delivered in before you and I suppose read; and then we shall refer the credit of the matters complained of to your consciences, that accordingly we may have justice done us."

King. "Your petition is not now read; would you have it read? It has been read before."

Lawrence Steel. "This contains further matter than what has yet been read before you.

Lord Chancellor. "Of what do you complain?"

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Lawrence Steel. "We complain of the havoc and spoil made upon the freehold and tenement, and breaking open closets, boxes, &c."

Lord Chancellor. "What, you mean of the meeting room?"

Lawrence Steel. "Nay, the tenement adjoining to the meeting room; we complain of the rude multitudes haling and tearing women's clothes, and offering shameful incivilities to them; also their pulling an innocent man's coat off his back, and taking money out of his pocket," &c. [Of this, though he had more to speak, they seemed not willing to hear it.]

Lord Chancellor. "Of whom do you complain?"

Lawrence Steel. "We are loath to recriminate persons by name."

Lord Chancellor. "But you must tell us who. Is it the mayor?" &c.

George Whitehead. "Let them have some of their names."

Lawrence Steel. "John Helliar and sheriff Knight, with a rude multitude."

George Whitehead. "It appears that the sheriff and John Helliar, and other officers, have been most busy, and have encouraged the rude multitude in their abusive and riotous proceedings, and forced many to gaol directly from their meeting, at their will and pleasure,

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without any examination before a justice, or warrant of commitment ; and then have so crowded and filled the gaol, that the prisoners have not room to take their natural rest ; but some are forced to sit up in the nights."

Lord Chancellor. "What would you have the king do ? Would you have him relieve you from the law ?"

George Whitehead. "No ; we desire the king may relieve us from such irregular proceedings, as we conceive the law does not warrant."

Lord Chancellor. "Why then do you not take course at law, and relieve yourselves by law ?"

George Whitehead. "The prisoners and sufferers in Bristol, are disabled from relieving themselves by course of law."

Lord Chancellor. "How are they disabled ? What reason can you give that they are so disabled ?"

George Whitehead. "Several reasons, as,

"First, they are prosecuted on the Conventicle Act, made the 22nd year of the king ; and all the relief allowed us by law, is by way of appeal : and it admits of appeal to no higher court, than the court of sessions belonging to the same county, which is the county of Bristol, where there is no probability of relief upon

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appeal; because there they must appeal to their adversaries, as some there in authority are; and John Knight, sheriff, is an extreme adversary, and has been violent against them; and he has return of the juries according to his own purpose.——"

King. "Can you not procure a London jury then?" &c. *

George Whitehead. "Besides, if they make their appeal, they are liable to have the oath of allegiance put to them, to prevent prosecuting their appeal; for such kind of precipitant course hath been used against us."

One in council. "He counts the tender of the oath of allegiance a precipitancy," &c.

George Whitehead. "No, it is the manner of requiring it, I mean; when it is done with design to anticipate the appellant and prevent the trial of his appeal.

"Secondly, the riots and abuses that are committed upon our Friends at their meetings, by tearing women's scarfs, beating, throwing persons down, &c. which are done by a rude company that are encouraged by the constables and officers who should keep the peace: so that there is none that will arrest or apprehend the

* Supposed to be meant of the jury that acquitted the earl of Shaftsbury, and some others, upon trial in London.

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rioters, that we know of, because the officers take their parts and animate them; and the rioters and abusive persons can readily escape in the crowd.

"The third reason———."

King. "And thirdly; let us hear the third reason."

George Whitehead. "The third reason of their being disabled is, for those of our Friends that are committed to gaol; though we conceive their commitment irregular, yet if they should enter actions of false imprisonment against those that committed them, they may be destroyed in their strait and close confinement before they can have relief by a course of law that way; they being so severely kept under hatches by their adversaries, if they should enter actions of false imprisonment against them, that might be an occasion to them to revenge themselves the more severely on the prisoners in the mean while."

One in council. "Seeing the conventicle act admits of no appeal to any higher court than to the same court of sessions for that county, why do you appeal or make your complaint here? what would you have the king do for you?"

George Whitehead. "We desire the king, and you of his council, tenderly to consider our suffering case, and how far the king may relieve

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us from those irregular proceedings that shall appear contrary to law."

Lord Chancellor. "You would have the king to relieve you from the law, to interpose between you and the law; which he cannot do."

George Whitehead. "No, under favour, lord chancellor, that inference follows not from what is proposed on our parts; we desire that the king would be pleased to interpose between us and the destruction that attends us, through the irregular and extreme proceedings of those persons, who (whilst they pretend to put the king's laws in execution, and in pursuance of an order from him) exceed all the severity and bounds of the law: our present complaint therefore lies, not against the law or execution thereof simply; but against the mal-administration, the hard usage, and exorbitant proceedings we meet with, contrary to all law and justice as we conceive."

Lord Chancellor. "Well, we have heard you; you may withdraw."

George Whitehead. "May it please the king yet to hear me a little farther, that the king and you his ministers may understand how probable the truth of our complaint is against those irregular and erroneous proceedings in Bristol, and how incident the justices there are to commit error in their proceedings against our Friends

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who suffer there; please to take one instance, viz.

"The most of their warrants of commitment, or mittimusses whereby our Friends are committed to gaol, and whereof we have here copies, are defective and wanting in two material points, as,

"First, the justices do not therein signify their lawful authority, as being the king's justices of the peace before whom the prisoners were brought. And,

"Secondly, their command to the keeper of the gaol for safe custody of the prisoners, is not given in the king's majesty's name, but in their own private names; except that there is one named major, and one William Bristol; the rest are only in their private or personal names: no mention made in their mandamus to the keeper, that these are in his majesty's name to will and require you, &c. but only they commit them in their own private names. This we conceive is irregular and unwarrantable in law; and this I give only as one instance, to evince the probability of the truth of our complaint, and that those justices are subject to err in their proceedings in omitting such material points."

Lord Chancellor. "Those defects are exceptions pleadable, and they may be heard if they remove themselves by habeas corpus."

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L. P. S. "That exception of yours will not serve your turn."

Lord Chancellor. "You may withdraw, &c."

George Whitehead. "May it please the king and you his ministers to observe this one thing, namely, that those officers and rude persons in Bristol, who have done so much violence and spoil to our Friends, pretend power and authority from the king for such their proceedings; and under pretext of an order from the king to put the laws in execution, they take liberty to commit all their disorders and abuses against our Friends, because of their innocent meetings.

"Which being seriously considered, I hope the king will see cause to do himself justice, and likewise you his ministers will be concerned to do yourselves as well as us justice, by putting some stop to these their destructive proceedings, the violence and spoil they make under such pretence of the king's order and authority; pray let it be duly considered, whether or no thereby they do not reflect upon the king, and dishonour him before his people, whilst they render him the patron or mover of these their riotous and oppressive proceedings against the king's peaceable subjects; and whether or no they do not reflect upon you his ministers, tending to render you suspicious in the eyes of the people? I hope, on serious and tender

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consideration of these things, you will see cause to do yourselves and us justice.

"You have had experience of us, and of our peaceable deportment towards the king and government for above these twenty years; it is very hard we should now be thus severely used at this time a day!

"We have here a more large and particular state of our suffering case, which we desire you to receive and take notice of."

Which case at large, being very fairly written in several sheets of paper, on the one side of each sheet; George Whitehead delivered to the council board, in the king's presence; where it was received and laid down on the board, before the lord privy seal and lord chancellor, &c.

At last George Whitehead thus concluded, viz.

"I pray God preserve the king, and direct you his ministers, to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with God."

I do confess I was under a very weighty concern of spirit, to use my earnest endeavours in solicitation, in this heavy suffering case of our Bristol Friends, who then were sorely oppressed and abused; for it was a time of very hot, resolved persecution against them.

And upon a thorough inspection into their case, and viewing the copies of the warrants of

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commitment against the prisoners, together with the accounts of the riotous, shameful, and abusive work made against our Friends at their meetings in that city; I clearly perceived both how invidious, inconsiderate, and ignorant of law and justice the magistrates of that city were, who were then most busy against our Friends and most ready to grant warrants against them, either to imprison their persons or seize their goods, thereby to gratify mercenary informers and the worst of persecutors; to the great dishonour and reproach of that city, which formerly had been esteemed a place having more of profession and religion in it than many others.

The king appearing affected with the innocency and boldness of my pleading the sufferers' case, allowed me the more liberty to plead it against the persecutors; and not only so, but he suffered us (Lawrence Steel, Charles Jones, and myself) to stand, and me to plead before him and his council, with our hats on our heads all the time, which was about three quarters of an hour. And indeed the king had the more reason to suffer us in that posture, seeing he would not permit our hats to be taken off by the clerk of the council, when we were called in before him, as we understood; being minded to give himself some pleasant diversion, by

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trying us in our plainness and simplicity, agreeable to our profession and self-denying testimony.

In the years 1682 and 1683, George Whitehead appears to have been four times convicted under the Conventicle Act. In one of these cases, of which he has left a particular account, on being brought before the lord mayor for having preached at a meeting, this officer, instead of calling for his accusers, enquired of the prisoner *whether he did not preach at the meeting*. George Whitehead declined accusing himself; and on the question being put again by one of the mayor's officers, he again declined; and asked for his accusers. At length two persons who apprehended him were called to give evidence, when the following imperfect testimony was given by them.

A train-band officer. "I saw his lips go, but heard him not what he said."

Constable. "I heard his voice, but could not tell what he said so as to make sense of it; only I heard him mention Jesus Christ and the Spirit."

George Whitehead desired the lord mayor to notice, how far the testimony fell short of establishing the fact, which was constituted an offence by the act; and expressed a hope, that none would

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allow that to mention Jesus Christ or the Spirit, was contrary to the Liturgy of the Church of England. The plea of the prisoner, however reasonable, proved unavailing; he was fined twenty pounds, and distraint to a considerable amount was made on his goods.

On a subsequent occasion he was fined forty pounds; (it being the second conviction before the same magistrate;) without having been heard in his own defence or summoned to appear to answer the charges against him. The distraint was made with great violence; the constable, with two assistants, breaking open the back shop door, and several chamber doors; seizing, says the narrative, "beds and bedding, (not leaving him a bed to lie upon,) all, moderately valued, worth twenty-one pounds ten shillings. Then they seized linen, with a scrutoire, six cane bottomed chairs and others, and a large looking-glass, value five pounds eighteen shillings. Then they seized shop goods, currants and sugar, value five pounds twelve shillings; all moderately valued by the owners, amounting to thirty-three pounds. Though the goods so seized were not suffered to be inventoried, weighed, or appraised before being carried away.

"Two of George Whitehead's friends, to wit, John Edge and Joseph Peckover, fairly endea-

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vouring but to persuade the constables to more moderation, and to suffer an inventory of the goods before taken away, were apprehended at he same time, and for no other cause ; the constable swearing a riot against them, they were committed to Newgate, and there continued for bove ten weeks, to their own and their families' great injury and damage : the said Joseph being a Norfolk man, was near eighty miles from home."

George Whitehead thought it right to appeal against the conviction, under which the last distraint upon him had been made ; and he obtained a reversal of the magistrate's judgment. He could, however, obtain the return of only eleven pounds, that being the amount which had been paid into court as the sum made of the articles distrained. In another case, wherein he had been convicted by the recorder of London, he procured a respite of judgment, so that distraint was not made ; and he succeeded, on appeal, in establishing the illegality of the proceedings. He observes, that he was the more willing to seek justice, in these cases, by appeal to a superior court, though at a heavy expence, for the sake of many of his Friends under similar prosecutions, *through the agency of those beasts of prey the informers.*

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George Whitehead made a pretty copious selection of passages from the Liturgy of the Church of England, to which he gave publicity, to show that the proceedings of himself and his friends were not *contrary* to it; especially that the assembling together for mutual exhortation and edification, for worshiping God in spirit and in truth, without limitation to time or place, and the liberty of ministering according to the ability received, were recommended in several passages of the Common Prayer Book.

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SECTION XV.

Sufferings of Friends confined in Norwich, and endeavours for their release.—Persecution very severe.—G. Whitehead suffers by severe distraints in 1683.—Sufferings of Friends in London, and George Whitehead imprisoned in Newgate, 1684.

The sufferings of Friends confined in prisons still continued to be very great; and in few places, if any, were they more severe than in the city of Norwich; where a considerable number of honest people were closely confined in a low, nasty dungeon, twenty-seven steps below the guild-hall of the city.

George Whitehead has given the following account of his own and his Friends exertions for their relief.

On the 22nd day of the 12th month, 1682—3, a state of the case of the prisoners, commonly called Quakers, in Norwich, Gloucester, Bristol, Yorkshire, and Northampton, directed to the king, with request for relief, was delivered into the hands of the earl of Rochester, by George Whitehead, with desire that he would

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please to show it to the king; which he promised he would.

The 23rd George Whitehead again spake to the earl of Rochester, and desired him to show the said case both to the king and duke; which he promised he would do and said: "I will read it to the king this night." George Whitehead told him, that we are advised to deliver Norwich case singly by itself, to the council; which we intend to do this day.

Accordingly the same being the day the judges appeared at council before they went their circuits, George Whitehead and Gilbert Latey then attending, the case of Norwich suffering Friends was delivered at the council board by Sir Philip Lloyd, who was pre-engaged to present it and to move the reading of it, which accordingly he did; but was obstructed the reading by some in council, on pretence that it was not a formal petition, or not in the usual form.

The 24th of the 12th month, 1682—3, George Whitehead and Gilbert Latey went to the lord privy seal, and spake to him about the said case of Norwich prisoners. He told us: That notwithstanding the objection made in the council, the king recommended moderation to the judges when they were below, and enquiry into the

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state of the prisoners and their usage. This he told us twice over.

A little after George Whitehead and Gilbert Latey had spoken to the lord privy seal, they went up into the gallery to speak with the king, at his coming out of the park; where, after some time of waiting, the duke and his attendants passed by to meet the king; and after a little space, the king and his attendants came along the long gallery towards his lodgings. George Whitehead then stepped up to the king without any interruption, the whole company being civil, and thus proceeded:

"May it please the king to grant us the favour of a few words; it is in behalf of many of the king's peaceable subjects who are prisoners at Norwich, and there like to be buried alive in holes and dungeons."

King. "Can they not swear themselves out of prison?"

George Whitehead. "Under favour, such are not in Society with us. We entreat the king to commiserate this distressed case of the prisoners in Norwich, for they are burying them alive in a dungeon under ground."

King. "Have you a paper? If you have a paper of their case, I will take it."

George Whitehead. "Yes, here is a paper;"

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which he delivered into the king's hand, and he gently took it.

George Whitehead proceeded: "They are a poor harmless people, poor woolcombers, weavers, and tradesmen, &c. likely to be destroyed in prison, in holes under ground; we entreat the king not to suffer these his peaceable subjects to be buried alive."

With more discourse which the said George Whitehead then had with the king; and I perceived these last words took most hold upon him, viz. my entreating him not to suffer his peaceable subjects to be buried alive.

Gilbert Latey then stepped to the king, saying: "We are the king's subjects that never did any thing against him; we have been peaceable, and we can truly say, have served him and never were against him; yet our Friends are great sufferers, and they lie in a dungeon twenty-seven steps deep in the ground in Norwich: wherefore we have more earnestly sought their relief."

My friend Gilbert Latey, as well as myself, being often tenderly affected with our Friends' deep sufferings and hardships, spake to the king in very tender affection, and a sense of the Lord's power and holy fear; which reached the king's heart and conscience, and others about him, beyond his utterance or what he could in

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words demonstrate. G. L. being also freely resigned to accompany me, and, according, to his ability, to assist in those exercises and applications in the sufferers' behalf; and we were often comforted together, and assisted in our endeavours by the Power of the Lord, which we had special and very tender regard unto; and He thereby helped and strengthened us, to his praise and our great comfort and encouragement: glory to his excellent Name and Power for ever!

After I had earnestly moved the king for relief of our suffering Friends in Norwich, he gave some instructions about the prisoners to the judges, who were to go the Norfolk circuit next following. Accordingly at Norwich, judge Hugh Windham gave order that the prisons or rooms therein should be viewed, where the Quakers were confined, and affidavits to be made thereof before a master in chancery; which accordingly was done by an attorney, and the affidavits were sent up to me; containing a true account of matter of fact, relating to the places where our Friends were so miserably confined.

Whereupon our Friend William Crouch went with me to the said judge Windham, to deliver the affidavits to him; esteeming him the most proper person to take cognizance thereof, it being

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obtained pursuant to his order or advice at the assizes before; that he might acquaint the king therewith. But instead of so doing, or of showing compassion to the sufferers, he refused to receive or accept the affidavits which he himself had ordered; only he did a little look upon and read them, or part of them, and fell to reproaching the meetings of our Friends, as being riots and riotous, &c.; when they were forcibly kept out of their meeting-house and met peaceably in the street, and there stood quietly waiting upon the Lord, in a peaceable and inoffensive posture. For so our Friends at Norwich and other places did, as I told the judge; and that therefore such their peaceable meetings could be no riots, nor riotous meetings, there neither being any show of arms, nor menacing words, nor any violence offered, nor any injury done to the persons or properties of any others.

Upon which discourse the judge seemed offended; and standing up with his arms akimbo, and his hands on his sides, answered: "You'll know the law better than I, I warrant you; but I will have you know, you shall not be masters over the law, but the law shall be master over you, so long as I live or have to do with the law," &c.

I answered: "I will not compare with thee as to knowledge and learning in the law; thou

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hast had the advantage of education therein, which I have not had; yet nevertheless, I have had occasion in my time, to understand something of truth and justice, &c. having been a sufferer myself, on a conscientious account, under the several governments since we were a people, both in Oliver Cromwell's days and since; and in all my sufferings and trials, I never saw cause to change my judgment, or turn with the times; but rather, through all, to be the more confirmed in what I believe and profess respecting religion."

I also spake further and closely to him, how that he had had an opportunity and power to have done our suffering Friends in Norwich some kindness, in order to their relief; and withal told him, that he and I, and all men, must give account to the Great Judge of all for all our actions, and he for not relieving our poor suffering Friends; or to that purpose. And seeing he would not accept the affidavits before mentioned, so as to deliver the same to the king, I asked him: "What we should do with them?" He said: "You may carry them to my lord keeper," that is, North; which advice, though slightly given, I readily took hold of: having cleared my conscience to him the said judge, who at last carried himself more mildly towards

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us, than he did in the former part of our discourse.

The next day William Crouch and I went to the said lord keeper, at his house; and being admitted to him in his closet, I told him, by judge Windham's advice we were come to him with certain affidavits from Norwich, which the judge had given order for, concerning the confinement of our Friends who were detained close prisoners; and then delivered the affidavits to him. Whereupon he began to accuse our Friends' meetings with being riotous, much after the same manner judge Windham had done. I fairly reasoned the case with him a little while on our Friends' behalf, and after some discourse told him, that we hoped he would present those affidavits to the king, procured by judge Windham's order pursuant to the king's instructions. Whereupon the keeper promised he would deliver them; upon which I was eased in my spirit, for that the king might thereby see our Friends' hard usage in the gaol and dungeon in Norwich the more confirmed, by such a legal proof as he could not deny. Not doubting the keeper's performance of his promise, we left the case with him and withdrew.

Our labour and solicitation for our oppressed Friends at Norwich held a considerable time,

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and their suffering was the more prolonged by their persecutor Stebbings, of whose cruelty their chief complaints were; to excuse and palliate which, his endeavours were to render the sufferers criminal and as obnoxious as he could, aspersing them as obstinate, riotous, &c. thereby to incense the magistrates and government against them; which gave us occasion to be the more zealously concerned to discover, to his and our superiors, his unwarrantable and inhuman proceedings against the poor, harmless sufferers; and farther to make application to the king in the sufferers' behalf: wherein my ancient friend Gilbert Latey was willing and free to be concerned with me; and accordingly we took an opportunity to go to the king.

On the 25th of the second month, 1683, we took boat for Kingston; but the weather began to be so very stormy and tempestuous upon the river, that we were forced to take in at Wandsworth, and lodge there that night at the widow Springets. Next morning we arose by the time it was well light, and walked to Kingston; it raining almost all the way. We made some stop at Ann Fielders, at Kingston, till we had a little refreshed ourselves and dried our clothes; and then we hastened away to Hampton-court, to meet with the king before he went to council.

As we went along the park toward the court,

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we saw at a distance divers persons standing in the porch, looking towards us; and one above the rest I observed, who I believed was the king, by his blue riband and black cap. And not being willing to go abruptly into his presence, to open our case to him without his leave, at a little distance I called to the king, desiring him to favour us with a few words; which he presently granting, one of his gentlemen came to us, and gently took off our hats and hung them on the pales before the court; and then we went to the king, who was ready to hear us.

Divers great persons being present at the gate, I proceeded to open our case to him, concerning the continuance of the hard suffering of our Friends in Norwich, in manner following.

First, I reminded the king, that our poor Friends were still continued under great hardships, in gaol, in holes, and a dungeon under ground, and desired that the king, in his clemency, would please to relieve them; further opening their distressed case.

The king answered: "It is against law they suffer so, and I will take care concerning them."

I was truly glad when I heard him give this answer; believing that the complaints which had been made to him of our Friends' hard usage, and the said affidavits of others thereof,

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had such credit and weight with him, that I hoped he would cause them to be released.

The king questioned us about the reason of our not putting off our hats, and using the terms *thee* and *thou*, *yea* and *nay*. To which we gave him answer particularly, viz. that if we could put off our hats to any mortal, it should be to the king first; but for conscience' sake we could not to any mortal, but only in our approaching God in prayer. To which the king gave no particular reply.

George Whitehead. "Thou and thee to one person is Scripture language, and the true way of speaking."

Gilbert Latey. "As Paul did to king Agrippa, *Acts* xxvi. 2, viz. 'I think myself happy, O king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews; especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews,'" &c.

George Whitehead. "Concerning yea and nay, we are not strictly tied to the expressions, but sometimes use those of the same signification; as yes and no," &c.

A great person present asked us: "Why do you call him king? Why do you not call him his majesty?"

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George Whitehead. "As he is king he has majesty belonging to him, it is included; his majesty is his greatness and power."

King. "You should not stand upon things in affectation; the word *you* is now become usual in English; and the word *yeah* is used by seamen, when they call from the top of the mast to be heard upon deck; it is also a Dutch word, who express it *yah*."

George Whitehead. "We affect not singularity in words or behaviour, but desire to demean ourselves in that plainness and simplicity, which we are in conscience persuaded unto."

King. "The words *thee* and *thou*, might have been better translated out of the Greek, *you*," &c.

George Whitehead. "If so, then the translators were as simple as we the Quakers."

King. "Many of your Friends can swear, or take an oath, rather than lose their voices in election."

George Whitehead. "Though some few persons have sworn, who have sometimes gone under a profession, yet they are not in Society with us."

Gilbert Latey. "We are as much dissatisfied with such as have done so, as the king can be."

George Whitehead. "We desire nothing to

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be done to the prejudice or dishonour of the king, nor to join with or promote any interest against the king. The Lord knows our hearts; we have not the least design or desire, for the subversion or change of the government; nor can we reasonably be supposed to have any such design, seeing we were deep sufferers in Cromwell's time, as I myself was: therefore there is no reason we should seek to promote any interest against the king, but only desire, that God in his wisdom may direct and preserve the king, and that nothing may be done or suffered, that may be to the king's dishonour or hurt."

Gilbert Latey. "We would not lose our point that we came to the king for; that is, the case of our distressed Friends in Norwich, to whom we desire the king to show his princely clemency for their relief."

Although it was my friend's care we should not be diverted from our point by other discourse, I was as mindful of that as he could be; but by the way, I was willing to clear our innocency from jealousies and prejudice, wrongfully suggested to the king against us and our Friends.

In answer to Gilbert Latey.

King. "I will take notice of their case, and

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care about it, that it shall be called for in council."

George Whitehead. "If there be any objections against us, we pray the king to let us know them, and we hope to give such answers as shall be satisfactory."

The reason of this proposal by George Whitehead was, that we were informed the secretary, Sir L. Jenkins, intended to produce an apology from the sheriffs of Norwich, against the affidavits concerning the gaol and dungeon wherein our Friends were confined; whereupon we attended the council that day, in order to be called in before them, or to hear the result thereof, in our case respecting our said suffering Friends; but we were not called in, nor did we hear of any such apology produced by the secretary, though he was a favourer of our adversary, sheriff Stebbings. It may be supposed, that the king's favourable answers to us, and his confessing their suffering was against law, and promising to take care concerning them, might anticipate and prevent producing any apology against them or their case.

To George Whitehead's last proposal before.

King. "You shall know I will take care about your business."

George Whitehead. "We gave affidavits to

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the lord keeper, which we hope were delivered to the king."

King. "Yes, yes; I will take notice of their case, and it shall be called on in council."

Gilbert Latey. "We accept it as a great favour, that we have this admittance to be heard, and pray God to preserve and direct the king," &c.

George Whitehead to the rest of the nobility present: "We acknowledge all your civilities and kindness towards us."

George Whitehead to the king as he was withdrawing: "We hope the king will be mindful of our suffering Friends in Norwich."

Howbeit, after so great endeavours and long solicitation, our said suffering Friends were continued prisoners until the next assizes that summer, and then were released; pursuant to the king's promise and instruction, as it was concluded; to the great comfort and relief of them and their afflicted families.

Although, with God's assistance, we prevailed with the king for relief in certain extreme cases of suffering, through great labour and solicitation, wherein I was much concerned, in great compassion toward our sorely oppressed Friends; yet hitherto there remained great oppressions and sufferings throughout most counties and cities in England, by divers kinds

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and sorts of severe prosecutions ; insomuch that several of us, namely, George Fox, Gilbert Latey, Alexander Parker, Francis Camfield, and myself, were weightily concerned to have a general state of our suffering Friends' case drawn up, by way of address or application, to be presented to the king ; in order to make him the more sensible of the great oppressions we still were exposed to. And accordingly, I did then take particular care, to have such an application effectually drawn to Friends' satisfaction.

First, the intent whereof was, to clear our innocency from a plot, that was reported to have been against the king and the duke of York.

Secondly, to make the king sensible of our great and long continued, as well as extreme sufferings, for our religious tender consciences towards Almighty God.

Thirdly, earnestly to move the king for our relief.

This address to the king was headed : " The humble address of the people commonly called Quakers."

After denying any connexion with the plots which had been unjustly attributed to them, they declared their sense of the duty of obe-

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dience to magistrates, in all things not contrary to conscience; and that, when for conscience' sake they could not obey, their principle and practice was to suffer patiently, and not to rebel or seek revenge. It concluded with the following appeal to the justice and humanity of the king.

"Our prayers and supplications are to the Almighty, for thy future safety and peace; and that in a thankful remembrance of God's great mercies towards thee, thou mayst be thereby obliged to show mercy, and to relieve the oppressed from these unmerited afflictions and persecutions, which a great number of us thy peaceable subjects do even at this day suffer under, in our persons and estates; not only by laws made against, but also by laws never intended against us. And which is more extreme, divers severities of late have been and still are inflicted; for which no colour or pretence of law hath been or can be alleged; several gaols being so filled as that they want air, and many innocent persons are held under extreme distress, without regard to age, sex, or condition; to the loss of some lives already, and apparent hazard of many more; if not to the endangering infection in divers cities and places in this nation. And many houses, shops, barns, and fields are ransacked, and swept of goods, corn,

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and cattle; tending also to the great discouragement of trade and husbandry, and to the impoverishing of a great number of quiet and industrious people; and that for no other cause but for their religious worship, and the exercise of their tender consciences towards Almighty God that made them, who is the sovereign Lord of all, and king in men's consciences.

"Therefore we humbly intreat thee, O king, in princely justice, Christian charity and compassion, to open our prison doors and take off our bonds; relieve the innocent and oppressed in thy land, that fear God and in conversation truly honour the king; and suffer not the ruin of such as are quiet in the land, nor the widow and the fatherless, for their peaceable consciences, to lie at the door of a prince professing the tender and compassionate religion of Christ."

This address was presented to king Charles the Second, at Windsor castle, the 8th day of the 6th month, called August, 1683, by George Whitehead, Alexander Parker, Gilbert Latey, and Francis Camfield, and read distinctly to the king and the duke, in the presence of many more of the nobility, &c. by me.

After I had read it, our ancient Friend Francis Camfield, declared a few words very weightily; reminding him of the mercy of the Great God

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to him, both in his great deliverances, preservation, and restoration; desiring that as the Almighty had shown mercy and compassion to him, in his afflictions and straits, he would show or extend mercy and compassion to his afflicted people; and withal prayed for the king, according to our supplications hinted in the foregoing application: to which he said: "I thank you."

The king at that time appeared seriously affected with our complaint; and soon after we were told by a great person, that he said to a duke that stood by: "What shall we do for this people? the prisons are filled with them." And that the duke, to divert him from his concern therein, drew him into other discourse.

I have been bowed in spirit under a great weight and concern, with earnest breathing and secret supplication to the Lord to assist me, so often as I have had occasion personally to appear before the king, to make application to him on behalf of my suffering Friends and brethren; and my exercise was the greater, when it was difficult to obtain access or to meet with him; which I have divers times very earnestly laboured for, and also to be admitted to appear before him and his council, to plead their cause. And the Lord our God has made way for me therein, and by his power assisted me, in freely and boldly pleading the cause of

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the innocent for truth and justice, without being any ways timorous or daunted by the face of king, princes, or nobles; and in these services, when the Lord has helped me through them, I have felt great peace and comfort, and his Presence was with me, enabling me to speak pertinently, and influencing them to hear attentively: praised be the Lord my God!

But though a little relief was obtained, in particular instances, by these applications to the king; he was too much addicted to pleasure to act firmly or constantly, in regard to what he professed to wish; and his profession of tolerant principles being attributed to a desire to screen popery, his apparent disposition to the toleration of dissenters, excited a hostile feeling on the part of many persons, and probably retarded the course of public opinion in favour of religious liberty; nor was this feeling likely to be diminished by the apprehension, that the king was anxious to extend the prerogative of the crown, and that he had actually done so by the suspension of the laws which particularly affected the Quakers. Whatever might be the cause, certain it is, that the sufferings of Friends had never been more extensive, nor perhaps more severe, than in the two last

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years of the life of this thoughtless and voluptuous monarch.

George Whitehead gives the following description of the state of the Society at that time.

Being shut out of our meeting-houses for divers years, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, and our meetings kept in the streets in all sorts of weather, winter and summer, was a trial and hardship upon us. But that trial was not so great, as to have our estates and livelihoods exposed to ruin by ravenous informers; although it was no small hardship to our persons, to be kept out of doors in the streets, in the great severe and long frost and snow, in the year 1683, for about three months together, when the river Thames was so frozen up, that horses, coaches, and carts, could pass to and fro upon it, and a street also be erected and stand over it.

And yet in all that hard season, when we were so long kept out in the streets in the bitter cold air, I do not remember that I got any harm or injury thereby, although I frequently attended those our meetings in the streets; wherein I took great and serious notice of the merciful Providence of Almighty God, towards myself and many more of our Friends, who were sharers in the same mercy and preservation in

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that suffering and exercise; no thanks to our unmerciful persecutors: but to our Heavenly Father be the glory and praise for ever!

We had in those days some opportunities to publish the Truth openly in the streets, and also to make public supplication to God; but more frequently were not permitted, but pulled away by force, and either sent to prison or turned into the meeting-house, and there detained under guard until the meeting was ended in the street. Thus were the ministers and others among us often forcibly interrupted, and scarcely suffered, many times, to declare two or three sentences, without being haled away; however, we saw it our duty, in the fear of the Living God, to keep our meetings, and patiently to wait upon Him; wherein we often enjoyed his Presence to our consolation, even in our silent waiting upon Him: being not called to strive or contest with our adversaries, or their servants whom they employed, but in faith and patience to bear all; believing that in due time thereby we should obtain victory. It was often then before me, that the Lamb and his faithful followers should have the victory, which was matter of secret comfort to me many times: glory to his Name for ever!

In those days I clearly saw, that the testimony required of us to bear, was not so much in

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words, declaration, or ministry, as to stand our ground in faith and patience, and to travail in spirit, with secret breathing and earnest supplication unto God to plead our cause; it being his own cause for which we suffered: and therefore we patiently committed it to Him that judgeth righteously.

In the year before the king's decease, I and divers other Friends were still desirous he should be made sensible what great sufferings were still continued upon our Friends, both by imprisonment and spoil; and our Friend William Mead and others of us, being concerned the king should be at least acquainted and moved thereupon, the same was done; and by the king's authority, direction given to the sheriffs of the counties respectively, throughout England, to return the names and causes of our Friends then prisoners; an account whereof was given to the king, by way of petition and information: a general memorandum whereof follows.

The 15th of the 11th month, 1683, George Whitehead and A. Parker attended the king, to present the general suffering of our Friends, both in prison and out of prison, by way of petition. In the afternoon we met with the king in the long gallery, and presented the petition; which he received, and George

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Whitehead spake a few words to him on this wise :

" We intreat the king to excuse our importunity, for our extremity is the cause ; we pray the king tenderly to consider our suffering condition and afford us relief, accounts being returned from the sheriffs of our Friends in prison," &c.

To which he answered : " Well, well, well."

And perceiving the king then in some haste, George Whitehead told him : " If he pleased, we would acquaint the Lord Sunderland (being secretary of state) more fully with our case, that he might inform the king thereof," &c.

To which the king answered : " Do, do."

But alas ! the king's time was but short ; he was then near his end, and did not live to relieve us, either by opening the prison doors or removing the great oppressions and severe persecutions we then suffered, and which he left us under ; his opportunity being slipped and day over and gone.

I think I was the last Friend that spake to the king, to move him for relief from our sufferings but a few weeks before his end. He left about fifteen hundred of our Friends, both men and women, prisoners ; besides their being then eagerly followed and persecuted by wicked informers ; and many hundreds under heavy

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oppression and sufferings, for twenty pounds per mensem, and two-thirds of their estates seized, and great spoil made upon them in many counties and parts of the nation. We were still kept out of our meeting-houses in the streets, both in and about London and divers other places; which persecutions and sufferings were continued upon us for some time after king James the Second came to the throne, and until he was prevailed upon to afford us some relief and liberty. All which we have cause to ascribe principally to the over-ruling Power and Providence of Almighty God; in whose hands the hearts of kings and princes are: and He can turn them like waters. To Him be the dominion and praise of all for ever!

In the year 1684, George Whitehead being taken at a meeting in White Hart Court, in the act of prayer, was for a short time confined in the prison of Newgate, under an indictment for being engaged "in an unlawful assembly, *riotously and with force of arms!*" The recorder evinced his usual severity; but George Whitehead observes, that some of the magistrates of the city of London were men of more moderation than the recorder; and the sheriff, Sir Samuel Dashwood, soon sent an order to the keepers of Newgate, to discharge him from his

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imprisonment; which was thus of only about sixteen days' continuance.

He thus expresses himself, on reviewing the sufferings to which he had been exposed in the few previous years.

"I humbly thank the Lord, my Heavenly Father, and praise his worthy Name, in remembrance how He enabled me to be resigned to his will, in suffering both in person and estate; and how well my dear wife was given up to suffer with me, for the blessed Truth's sake, in those days. But the Lord our God supported and comforted us under those trials; as we were with one accord resigned to his will, to bear faithful testimony for his Holy Name and everliving Truth, which He had made us partakers and witnesses of. Blessed be His glorious Name for evermore!"

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SECTION XVI.

Suffering state of the Society at the death of Charles II.—Representation of it by an interview with king James II, and address to him.—List of the sufferers—Second interview with the king, and full representation of the Quakers' case addressed to him and to the parliament—The king grants a general warrant for the release of the prisoners.—Commission granted on George Whitehead's application to the king to inquire into the dishonest practices of the informers—Their suppression—One of them in distress applies to George Whitehead, and is relieved by him.

The period of the death of Charles the Second, appears to have been the extreme point of suffering to the Society of Friends. Notwithstanding his character for good nature, and the frequent expression of his intention to relieve them, they were persecuted to a great extent, under the laws made against Papists in the reign of Elizabeth; whilst the immediate objects of those statutes were, under the king's favour, enjoying comparative liberty. Probably the worshipers of UNIFORMITY would not have been satisfied without some victims for their idol; and it was no doubt more agreeable to the king

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to sacrifice the poor nonconforming protestants, than to allow the insane fury of the people to fall upon his immediate friends.

The prisons of England were crowded with honest and industrious people, whose only crime was a tender conscience, and against whom it might truly be said, that no *occasion was found, except concerning the law of their God.*

No less than FOURTEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY of the people called Quakers were at this time in the prisons of England and Wales, in many places crowded together without respect to age, sex, or circumstance. in cold and filthy holes and dungeons, where many had died, and faithfully earned the crown of martyrdom. Not a few of these were fathers and mothers of families, which were thus left destitute of their natural guardians and protectors : indeed it is difficult to say whether the suffering within the walls of the prisons, intense as it was, was not exceeded by that endured by the numerous relatives and friends of the prisoners. The cruel separations of husbands from wives, and fathers and mothers from their children, were generally preceded or accompanied by robbery and spoil, and not unfrequently the entire ruin of the family as regarded their means of outward support. The true order of government was directly inverted,

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governors being a terror to those who did *well* rather than to those who did *ill*.

Apologizing to the reader for these introductory observations to the present chapter, I proceed to give the substance of George Whitehead's account of his own and his friends' proceedings, immediately after the accession of James the Second to the English crown.

Much fear was now entertained as to what would become of protestant dissenters, many anticipating an increase of persecution, under the government of a professed papist. George Whitehead however, whose elastic mind never seemed to sink, had a lively impression which he communicated to his friends, that they should have ease under this king's reign ;—and certainly he spared no pains to bring it about.

A few weeks after the death of Charles, he presented to his successor, in company with Gilbert Latey and Alexander Parker, the following truly courteous but unflattering address.*

"To King James the Second.

The humble Application of the people called Quakers.

"Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God, by whom kings reign, to take hence the late king Charles the

* Echard in his history has given a very different but altogether spurious address to the King. The object of the composition appears to have been to place the Quakers in a ridiculous light.

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Second, and to preserve thee peaceably to succeed, we thy subjects heartily desire, that the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, may please to endue thee with wisdom and mercy, in the use of thy great power, to His glory, the king's honour, and the kingdom's good. And it being our sincere resolution, according to our peaceable principles and conversation, by the assistance of Almighty God, to live peaceably and honestly, as becomes true and faithful subjects under the king's government, and a conscientious people, that truly fear and serve God, we do humbly hope, that the king's tenderness will appear, and extend with his power, to express the same; recommending to his princely clemency, the case of our present suffering Friends hereunto annexed.

The case of the suffering Friends referred to in the petition, contains so simple and affecting an account of their situation that it is well worthy of perusal.

"*The distressed case and request of the suffering people commonly called Quakers, humbly presented.*

"Showing,

"That according to accounts lately given, above fourteen hundred of the said people, both men and women, are continued prisoners in England and Wales, only for tender conscience toward Almighty God that made them.* Many under sentence of premunire, and many near it, not for refusing the duty or substance of allegiance itself, but only because they dare not swear;

* The following list of the number of prisoners in each county is curious, as showing the wide spread of the Society at this time throughout England and Wales. We have no means of ascertaining the total number, but large as it no doubt was, the number of *sufferers*, including the families of the prisoners and those

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others under fines on the act for banishment; many on writs of excommunication; besides some hundreds have died prisoners, many by means of this long imprisonment since the year 1680, as it is judged; thereby making widows and fatherless, and leaving poor innocent families

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who suffered the spoil of their goods, must have formed a large and affecting proportion of the whole Society. No doubt also, such was the *sympathy* as well as courage of this branch of the Church of Christ at that day, that it might be almost said: "Whether one member suffered all the members suffered with it."

An account of the number of the said prisoners called Quakers, in the several counties.

Bedfordshire	30	Leicestershire	37
Berkshire	37	Lincolnshire	12
Bristol	103	London and Middlesex	66
Buckinghamshire	19	Norfolk	52
Cambridgeshire	8	Northamptonshire	59
Ely	11	Nottinghamshire	6
Cheshire	9	Oxon	17
Cornwall	32	Salop	18
Cumberland	22	Somersetshire	36
Derbyshire	1	Southamptonshire	15
Devonshire	104	Staffordshire	1
Dorsetshire	13	Suffolk	79
Durham	39	Surrey	29
Essex	10	Sussex	17
Gloucestershire	66	Warwickshire	31
Hertfordshire	18	Westmoreland	5
Herefordshire	1	Wilts	34
Huntingtonshire	10	Worcestershire	15
Kent	16	Yorkshire	279
Lancashire	73	Wales	30

TOTAL . . . . 1460.

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desolate, in distress and sorrow. These two hard winters' confinement tending also to the destruction of many in cold holes and gaols, their healths being greatly impaired thereby: besides, the violence and woful spoil made by merciless informers, on the conventicle act, upon many convicted, unsummoned, and unheard in their own defence, both in city and country. As also on Qui Tam writs, and other processes, for twenty pounds a month, and two-thirds of estates seized for the king; all tending to the ruin of trade, husbandry, and industrious families; to some not a bed left, to others no cattle to till their ground, or give them milk, nor corn for bread or seed, nor tools to work withal. And all these, and other severities, done under pretence of *serving the king and the Church*, thereby to force us to violate our consciences, and consequently to destroy our souls, which we are very tender of, as we are of our peace with God and our own consciences, though accounted as sheep for the slaughter. And notwithstanding all these long sustained extremities, we the said people do solemnly profess and declare, in the sight of the Heart Searcher, that we have nothing but good will and true affection to the king, praying for his safety, and the kingdom's peace. We have never been found in any seditious or treasonable designs, as being wholly contrary to our Christian principles and holy profession.

"And knowing that where the word of a king is, there is power, we in Christian humility, and for Christ's sake, intreat that the king will please to find out some expedient for our relief in these cases, from prison, spoil, and ruin.

"And we shall, as in Christian duty bound, pray God for the king's welfare in this world, and his eternal happiness in that which is to come.

"London, 2nd of 1st month, called March, 1684–5."

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Between three and four months after the first interview, no relief being yet obtained, George Whitehead was "deeply concerned in spirit" to go to the king, to give him further information, and to endeavour to persuade him to put a stop to the ruinous persecutions. Acquainting his friend Robert Barclay with his intentions, (for whom the king had a particular respect, having known him in Scotland,) he was willing to unite in the application; and they appear to have readily obtained admittance into the king's presence.

George Whitehead took the principal part in this interview; from his account of which I select the following passages:

George Whitehead. "We thankfully acknowledge the king's favour in granting us this admittance. Having acquainted the Lord Peterborough with our great sufferings by informers, &c. in and about London, he promised us to acquaint the king therewith; which we hope he did, for he said, 'he had acquainted the king with our desire, that he would speak to the recorder, that a stop might be put to the informers,' &c. And further told us, 'that the king promised to send for the recorder, and speak to him himself, and that we should shortly feel the effects.'"

King. "The Lord Peterborough did speak

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to me, and acquainted me with it: I have not as yet spoken to the recorder, but intend to speak to him to-morrow; I'll send for him into the prince's lodgings, and speak with him about it: therefore do you put me in mind of it, when I go into the House of Lords to-morrow."

George Whitehead. "The late king, after his coronation, gave out his Proclamation of Grace, to release our Friends out of the gaols throughout England; upon which many hundreds were released.

"And in the year 1672, the late king gave out his Declaration of Indulgence, for the liberty of tender consciences; and his Letters Patent, (or pardon,) under the great seal, to release our Friends out of prisons: whereupon we had liberty for some years."

King. "I intended a general coronation pardon; but the reason why it was deferred until the meeting of parliament, was, because some persons who are obnoxious, by being in the late plot, would thereby have been pardoned, and so might have come to sit in parliament; which would not have been safe. But I intend that your Friends shall be discharged out of prison. I was the cause of drawing up that Declaration, and I never gave my consent to the making of it void: it was the Presbyterians

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who caused it to be made void or cancelled, in parliament."

George Whitehead. "The imprisonments, as also the great spoil made by informers, is still very hard upon many in and about London, and other parts: five warrants at once have been executed upon one person, amounting to fifty pounds, being ten pounds a warrant. We intreat the king to put a stop to these informers; for many are greatly disabled by them, and about giving over their trades and shops; although we are as willing to pay our taxes and civil duties to the king as any other people. And by the close imprisonment of many, even here in London, in Newgate gaol, divers of our Friends have been so suffocated, that they have been taken out sick of a malignant fever, and in a few days died."

King. "I intend your Friends shall be released out of prison; and I'll consider of a way how to stop the informers: but they having a part of the fines, I must consider which way I may best take to stop them and ease you:" or to the very same effect.

George Whitehead. "We have just exceptions against the Conventicle Act itself, in divers clauses."

Robert Barclay. "Convicting men behind their backs, is contrary to the law of nations."

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George Whitehead. "And then the awarding treble costs against the appellant, in case he is cast in the trial of his appeal, but no costs against the informers, nor any provision made that they shall make any restitution to the party grieved, in case they be cast or nonsuit in their unjust persecution; this appears very unequal.

"We are inclinable to present an account of our sufferings to the parliament, wherein we desire the king's favourable concurrence, and therefore thought meet to acquaint the king first with our intention; for we are willing and desirous that he should be acquainted with all public applications we make to the parliament."

King. "What is it?"

George Whitehead. "It is a plain account of our sufferings in matters of fact, of the same kind with that which we lately gave to the king, with some reason offered for the repeal of the Conventicle act."

King. "Let me see it, and I'll give you my opinion concerning it."

George Whitehead. "We intend to show it the king. And we humbly and thankfully acknowledge the king's favour, in admitting us thus far to be heard."

The account alluded to in the foregoing conversation, was addressed: "To the king and both houses of parliament, the suffering condi-

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tion of the peaceable people called Quakers, only for tender conscience towards Almighty God, humbly presented."

It stated: "That of late above one thousand five hundred of the said people, both men and women, having been detained prisoners in England, and part of them in Wales, some of which being since discharged by the judges, and others freed by death through their long and tedious imprisonment, there are now remaining, according to late accounts, about one thousand three hundred eighty and three, above two hundred of them women."

It then proceeded to state the grounds and nature of the sufferings, much in the same manner as had been done in the account presented to the king immediately after his accession; * and after enumerating the particular statutes under which they chiefly suffered,† the document proceeds as follows:

"Many, both men and women, have been fined, imprisoned, and detained for non-pay-

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* The list of Sufferers is given at page 176, as a note.

† The 5th of Eliz. chap. 23, De Excommunicatio Capiendo.

The 23rd of Eliz. chap. 1, for Twenty Pounds per Month.

The 29th of Eliz. chap. 6, for Continuation.

The 35th of Eliz. chap. 1, for Abjuring the Realm, on pain of Death.

The 1st of Eliz. chap. 2, for Twelve-Pence a Sunday.

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ment, some till death, on indictments at common law, for riots, breaches of the peace, &c.; instance the city of Bristol, what a great number have been these divers years straitly confined and crowded in gaol, mostly above one hundred on such pretence, about seventy of them women, many aged. And in the city of Norwich, in the years 1682-3, about seventy kept in hold, forty-five whereof in holes and dungeons, for many weeks together; and great hardships have been and are in other places: so that such our peaceable meetings are sometimes fined on the Conventicle act, as for a religious exercise, and other times at common law, as riotous, routous, &c. when nothing of that nature could ever be proved against them, there being nothing of violence or injury either done, threatened, or intended, against the person or property of any one whatsoever.

"The during and tedious imprisonments are chiefly on the writs De Excommunicatio Capi-

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The 3rd of king James I. chap. 4, for Premunire, Imprisonment during Life, and Estates confiscated.

The 13th and 14th of king Charles II. against Quakers, &c. Transportation.

The 22nd of king Charles II. chap. 1, against Seditious Conventicles.

The 17th of king Charles II. chap. 2, against Nonconformists.

The 27th of Henry VIII. ch. 20, some few suffer thereupon.

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endo, upon the judgment of premunire, and upon fines said to be for the king.

"The great spoil and excessive distresses and seizures, are chiefly upon the Conventicle act, and for twenty pounds a month, two-thirds of estates, and on Qui Tam writs. In some counties, divers have suffered by seizures and distresses above eight years past; and writs lately issued out for further seizures in several counties, for twenty pounds a month, amounting to the value of many thousands of pounds; sometimes seizing for eleven months at once, and making sale of all goods and chattels, within doors and without, both of household goods, beds, shop goods, moveables, cattle, &c. and prosecution hereupon still continued, and in divers counties much increased: so that several, who have long employed some hundreds of poor families in manufacture, and paid considerable taxes to the king, are greatly disabled from both, by these writs and seizures as well as by long imprisonments. So many serge makers, of Plymouth, as kept above five hundred poor people at work, disabled by imprisonment: many in the county of Suffolk, under a long imprisonment, sentenced to a premunire; one whereof employed at least two hundred poor people in the woollen manufacture, when at liberty. Omitting other instances, that we may not seem too tedious, these

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may evince how destructive such severities are to trade and industry, and ruinous to many poor families.

" Be pleased to make our case your own, and do to us as you would be done unto : as you would not be oppressed or destroyed in your persons or estates, nor have your properties invaded and posterities ruined, for serving and worshiping Almighty God, that made all mankind, according to your persuasions and consciences, but would, no doubt, enjoy the liberty thereof; so we entreat you to allow the same liberty to tender consciences, that live peaceably under the government, as you would enjoy yourselves ; and to disannul the said Conventicle act, and to stop these devouring informers, and also take away all sanguinary laws, corporal and pecuniary punishments, merely on the score of religion and conscience ; and let not the ruin and cry of the widow, fatherless, and innocent families lie upon this nation, nor at your door ; who have not only a great trust reposed in you, for the prosperity and good of the whole nation, but also do profess Christianity and the tender religion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

" Having thus given you in short, the general state of our suffering case, in matter of fact, without personal reflection ; we, in Christian humility and for Christ's sake, intreat that you

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will tenderly and charitably consider of the premises, and find out some effectual expedient or way for our relief from prisons, spoil, and ruin."

George Whitehead and Gilbert Latey waited upon the king, previous to their presenting the address to the parliament, to receive his sanction; which he freely gave: * and having now become fully acquainted with the severe persecution under which the Society laboured, he was pleased, says the narrative, "to grant a comprehensive warrant or commission to the then attorney general, Sir Robert Sawyer, on our suffering Friends' behalf; including the several sorts of processes and convictions under which many of them suffered." † This order was dated 15th of March, 1685–6, little more than a year after the king's accession.

George Whitehead gives the following ac-

* Gough thinks the sudden prorogation of parliament prevented the address from being presented to it.

† Sewel, without referring to this special order for the discharge of the Quakers, attributes their relief to a proclamation of pardon, issued soon after the king ascended the throne; yet he quotes G. Fox's letter on the occasion, addressed to Friends, and which is dated four months after the commission to the attorney general.

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count of the proceedings to carry into effect this joyful release.

When this warrant was granted and delivered to us, the attorney general, Sir Robert Sawyer, was not in London, but near forty miles from thence, at his country house at Highcleare, in Hampshire; and Friends in London being very desirous that our Friends in the several prisons throughout England, &c. might forthwith be released; it was concluded that two or three of us should take a journey to the said attorney general, and deliver him the aforesaid warrant from the king; and then in the first place, to obtain a warrant or liberate thereupon, to discharge and release our Friends in and about London.

John Edge, Rowland Vaughan, and myself were desired forthwith to undertake the journey to the attorney general, for that service. At that time I was but weakly in body, and so much indisposed as to my health, that I thought myself very unfit for that journey, for I then kept my chamber; howbeit, they not being willing to go without me, I was in the greater strait, and after a short consideration was persuaded, and concluded to go with them if possibly I might be enabled to perform the journey.

Whereupon my dear friend Theodore Eccle-

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stone lent me a good easy horse, and I being weakly, we were part of two days and the morning following before we reached to the attorney general's, who civilly received and entertained us, when we had produced the king's commission to him; and we quickly persuaded him to give instructions to our then companion Rowland Vaughan, to draw up a warrant or liberate to release our Friends, who then were prisoners in London. And according to his instructions, Rowland drew up several warrants to discharge our Friends out of prison, which the attorney general signed that day; and to get them done he would have us stay dinner, so it was the third or near the fourth hour before we could get all done and signed, to come away thence; insomuch that it was within night before we got to Theal, about four miles beyond Reading, where we staid at an inn that night, and the next day came to Brentford; before which time I was recovered in my journey, and was so well that I could travel much better than when I left London; wherein I thankfully observed the merciful Providence of God, in affording me health and ability beyond expectation.

In a short time the attorney general returned to London, to his office in the temple, where I attended him (with Gilbert Latey sometimes) to

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sign the rest of the warrants; which according to his direction, Rowland Vaughan prepared for him to sign, to discharge the rest of our Friends out of prisons throughout England, so far as he had power given him by the commission aforesaid. This took us up considerable time to attend to and see effected, and the prisoners by degrees released; for we had something to do to obtain the warrants for release of our Friends in some places, especially at Bristol; the town clerk having detained our Friends there in prison for non-payment of his demands: which occasioned our complaint against him to the king; and on my debating the matter with him before the attorney general, he was persuaded to submit the matter to our Friends' courtsey and freedom, and was desirous that I would let him have the attorney general's warrant to discharge our Friends when he returned to Bristol; and accordingly I intrusted him with the warrant; whereupon he got them released out of prison.

Thus, though many had died in confinement, were a great number of worthy confessors for the Truth, liberated from their severe imprisonments of ten, twelve, and fifteen years; and permitted to return to the bosom of their families and the Church.

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Great however as was the case, the sufferings of the Society were by no means at an end. The clergy in general appeared decidedly unfriendly to toleration, and a great number of magistrates, especially in London and Middlesex, encouraged a set of vile informers, to whom the poor Quakers were a constant prey. George Whitehead now exerted himself earnestly, to induce the king to put a stop to the proceedings of these merciless creatures.

His exertions in this business were very successful. He inserts in his memoirs a petition to king James, which was signed by several of the sufferers, stating the cruelty and illegality of the proceedings against them; that they were frequently convicted "in their absence, and often on false depositions sworn by concealed informers"—that warrants against them were issued out by the recorder of London, "which were executed with great rigour and spoil, and without compassion to widows, fatherless, or poor families, who were sustained by their daily industry; not leaving them a bed to lie on:" that when they appealed from the recorder's judgment, he being judge also on the trial, altered the record and urged juries to find against the appellant; by which they incurred heavy charges and treble costs. Besides these grievances the petitions stated, "that numbers were imprisoned

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and crowded in gaol by him and others, for the same cause, to the greatly impairing of their healths and the loss of some lives."

After this complaint had been presented, George Whitehead addressed the king, requesting him to appoint commissioners to hear them and the informers face to face, that they might have a fair opportunity to prove the matters of fact complained of against them. The king granted this request, and issued a commission accordingly, which was delivered to George Whitehead without fees. He and some of his friends prosecuted this matter very efficiently. They delivered the commission to two persons who had been nominated as the investigators of the affair, and who authorized George Whitehead to issue summonses to all persons whom he wished to be brought before them. Having collected and fairly stated about fifty cases of unjust proceedings on the part of the informers towards Friends, he accordingly issued his summonses to the several parties.

On the day appointed, a great company of informers were collected at Clifford's Inn, doubtless under feelings of no little chagrin; but when they saw a large number of the usual objects of their prey, coming forward to charge them with injustice and cruelty, before commissioners who would give an impartial

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hearing to both parties, they seemed ready "to *gnash* upon them with their teeth."

Two justices of the peace, who had incurred the high displeasure of the informers, by refusing to grant warrants against some Friends, or to convict them in their absence, were present at the inquiry, at the first meeting of the commissioners.

George Whitehead proceeded very methodically in his charges, beginning with those cases in which informers had sworn falsely, producing each Friend's case in order, and calling upon the parties concerned in each to appear together. Numerous cases were fully established, in which the informers had sworn against Friends for being at meetings which they were not at; also for holding meetings at certain places and houses, where no meetings had been held; and they were also proved to have sworn upon trust, from one another's false and presumptuous information. These several cases of false swearing occupied six *broadsides;* and there were numerous cases of excessive distraints, accompanied by force and violence. So many instances indeed, says George Whitehead, "we gave to the commissioners on the first day, of the horrid abuses of the informers, that they seemed almost weary with hearing them; matters of fact being evidently proved against the informers to their

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faces, and to their great shame and confusion." At the first meeting they did not get through one-fourth of the charges; and a subsequent meeting was held, at which, though they did not get through half the cases, the commissioners thought they had ample grounds on which to form their report to the king. George Whitehead wished them, seeing the charges of false swearing and violence had been so fully proved against the informers, to discourage or stop their further proceedings; but this the commissioners thought was without their province.

The informers were of course greatly enraged against George Whitehead; and they so threatened him, that some of his friends were afraid of their doing him a mischief. He was however no way intimidated: "I told them," says he, "that I feared them not; nor what they could do; for I was bound in conscience to make them manifest to the government: they should not deter me, by their threats, from appearing before the highest authority against them."

George Whitehead had several interviews with the commissioners, in which he laid before them the cases which had not been inquired into. On one of these interviews they showed him, at his request, the draft of their report; when he was surprised to find, that instead of stating the plain matters of fact, in regard to

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which they had to inquire, they had given their opinion *as to an easier way of dealing with the Quakers in future*. George Whitehead remonstrated with them, for thus deviating from the points on which they were directed to report to the king; when "one of the commissioners told him how hardly they were put to it to draw up their report, being sent to out of London, by some great person or persons of the Church, and much requested to report nothing which might disable the informers, or put them by from their great service to the Church!" George Whitehead however pleaded for justice being done to them, by a report as to matters of fact being made to the king; and the commissioners did materially amend their report in consequence.

Some further information was given to the king relative to the cases in a letter; in which, having referred to the mal-practices of the informers, as stated in the report of the commissioners, the Friends concluded by earnestly entreating the king to put a speedy stop to the cruel proceedings against them. Our author, with all his coolness and moderation, seems unable to repress the feelings of his virtuous indignation, against the system of plunder allowed to be carried on under pretence of law, by the informers. "A company," says he, "of loose, irreligious, profligate wretches, have been encouraged and

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suffered to plunder, rob, steal, break houses, commit burglary, tear away and make havoc and spoil of their neighbours' goods, to serve the CHURCH and KING! What Protestant age or Church can parallel such barbarities and cruel persecution? How scandalous to Church and state were such agents!"

This scandal however was on the eve of being removed. Whether the king was sincere or not, in his professions in regard to liberty of conscience, Divine Providence was pleased so to overrule events, as tended to the ease of the suffering members of Christ's Church, who dissented from the established worship. "The king," says the memoir, "was at last induced so far to afford us relief from those devourers, by signifying his pleasure to some of his subordinate ministers, magistrates, &c. to put a stop to the destructive persecution and spoil, made upon us by the informers." "Their unjust trade and gain being discountenanced by the justices and the quarter sessions, in London and Middlesex, as well as other parts of the kingdom, and discoveries made of their wickedness and injuries, some of them were forced to fly; and others turned to beggary."

As during the severe sufferings which they had been called to endure for conscience' sake, the Friends had exhibited a remarkable instance

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of Christian patience; so also, when their enemies, the mercenary informers, became destitute, did they exhibit a no less striking instance of Christian forgiveness.

The Friends, though they had been so severely impoverished by the proceedings of the informers, did not hesitate to supply the wants of these worthless creatures in their destitution. George Whitehead gives an instance of this kind in his own case. "After the trade of informing was over," says he, "George Hilton, a notorious informer, came to my house, complaining to me that he was to be a servant to a great person, but wanted clothes or money to buy him some; whereupon I gave him something, being willing to render good against evil; he having been a very injurious adversary against myself, and many others of our Friends: however, I was comforted that the case was so well altered, as that from taking away our goods by force, these poor wretches were fain to come and beg of us." Thus did these Christians heap the coals of charity upon the heads of their enemies.

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SECTION XVII.

The state of Society in other parts of the nation.—Two meeting houses seized and used by the soldiers.—Application to king James respecting this and other cases of suffering.

The suppression of the wicked trade of the informers, though a very important step, was far from closing the sufferings of the Society, or the labours of many of its members, to obtain complete liberty of conscience. They wisely proceeded step by step in pointing out their grievances, and pressing them one after another upon the notice of the public, and of the highest authorities of the land.

Though the general pardon of the king had some effect in discouraging persecution, yet it did not alter the law; and a great number of Friends were at this time severely oppressed, and many of them greatly impoverished, by being charged or estreated in the exchequer, and by writs annually issued out thence against them, for seizure to be made on their goods and estates, under the old act against popish recusants; by which they were fined *twenty pounds a month, and two-thirds of their estates*

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for their monthly absence from their parish churches; and thereupon their corn, cattle, and other goods were seized by the bailiffs; "seizing," says the memoir, "for eleven months, twenty pounds a month, which amounts to two hundred and twenty pounds forfeiture in that time; the sottish, rude bailiffs, when they had seized on farmers' goods, remaining at their houses, eating and drinking until the goods were removed."

From the continued application of these cruel laws to the poor QUAKERS, who were the very *antipodes* of the PAPISTS against whom they were originally made, it is quite evident that the spirit of persecution was still strong in the country. King James, however, who had sheltered the real objects of this law, even more effectually than his brother had done, on being applied to by some Friends for a stay of proceedings, found it at least consist with his policy to grant the request; and "was pleased to give directions to the lord treasurer and attorney general, that the exchequer writs should not be issued out on that occasion." A respectful petition was then drawn up, addressed to the lord treasurer, praying that he would issue his warrant to the proper officer, the clerk of the pipe, for the staying of processes against the persons named in a list subjoined; who were under exchequer

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prosecution, and whose number amounted to several hundreds. The lord treasurer immediately granted the requisite order; and George Whitehead gives the following account of the subsequent proceedings. *

I was very industriously concerned, to obtain such a warrant for a speedy stop to be put to the said processes, which were then ready to be issued forth of the said pipe office in Grays-Inn. I had something to do, first with the treasurer's deputy and clerks of the treasury chamber, about their high demands of fees, which we could not answer; whereupon I made complaint to the lord treasurer himself; and he was so kind, as to cause them considerably to abate their demands, and to accept of what we could give; I remember our friend Samuel Waldenfield kept me company at that time; so the warrant was delivered to me.

After this Rowland Vaughan went with me to the clerks of the pipe, with our warrant to stay process, who seeing a long list of names

* The proceedings in this and many similar cases related in this work, strikingly illustrate, by contrasting them with the present state of things, the progress which has been made in the administration of justice, the establishment of the constitutional rights of the people, and the diminution or more careful exercise of the royal prerogative. *Editor.*

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annexed to the warrant, were upon very high demands for fees, amounting to many hundred pounds, they demanding a considerable fee for each, which we could no ways come near. They were very huffing and high toward us, though we civilly treated them, threatening if we did not pay them the fees demanded, that the writs should be issued out to the sheriffs of the several counties, to seize upon our Friends' estates; and to be sure it would be done to purpose, for, say they, this was like to be the last time, seeing process was to be stopped; so that if the writs then went forth, they concluded they would be the more severely executed and fall heavier upon the convicted than ever. Such like threats were to affright us into a compliance with their unreasonable demands of fees; which we neither would nor could do; whereupon we parted at that time.

Being much toiled, weakened, and impaired in my health, by attending, soliciting, and labouring for our Friends' relief in that case, I was taken suddenly ill, so that I was forced to keep house a few days: yet still the burden of Friends' sufferings lay so heavy upon my spirit, and care to have them relieved by a stay to the said process, that I forthwith sent to divers Friends to let them know how the case stood with me, and how far I had procured and

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brought forward the case of our suffering Friends, in order to their relief from the exchequer process: particularly I sent for my companion Gilbert Latey, at Kingston, who quickly came to London; and I acquainted him and our loving friend William Mead, how our case stood as to the clerks of the pipe refusing to stay the process unless they had the fees they demanded; whereupon I desired the said Gilbert Latey and William Mead to go and treat with those clerks, and see what they could bring them to. At last they brought them so far to abate their demands, as to come down to those Friends' terms and accept of what they proffered, that is, about sixty pounds instead of the many hundreds demanded; though it was not without complaining that they were so much deprived of what they esteemed their proper fees and dues.

That stay of proceedings, obtained with great care and industry, prevented the ruin of some hundreds of our suffering Friends in their respective counties, and saved many thousands of pounds in their estates. I had great peace and comfort in the Lord, in that He made me any way useful in helping our Friends from those heavy persecutions and oppressions: blessed be the Lord my God! who greatly helped me to serve Him in helping his people.

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Another case of hardship and suffering, which befell the Society in regard to two of their meeting houses, next engaged the attention of this unwearied advocate. It is thus stated in the memoirs :

About the 3rd month, 1685, the soldiers came and made the meeting house at the Park, in Southwark, a guard-house, and did great spoil and damage about and in the same, by pulling down pales, digging and cutting down trees, carrying away and burning them ; and also the wainscoting and benches about the room, and they carried away one of the out-doors and many of the casements ; and when the soldiers drew out to the camp, they left the house open for any body. Whereupon John Potter, the then owner, entered again, and made up the outward door and some other necessary repairs, and had a survey of the damages done, which amounted to about forty pounds.

The soldiers returning from the camp, again possessed themselves of the place and kept their guard therein for some time, in manner following, viz. on the 22nd of October, 1686, a quarter-master belonging to colonel Hailes's regiment, came to the chambers of the said John Potter's tenants and demanded entrance ; which being denied, the quarter-master, with the help of soldiers, broke in, handed away their goods,

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and turned out three aged women to another house: and when they had taken possession of our said meeting house and rooms below, they pulled down the galleries and made a brick wall across the lower room, with many other alterations, as if they intended to have the sole and perpetual possession to themselves; having made a sort of place for prayers, or a mass house, in one end, inclosed from the rest by the said partition wall; notwithstanding the said John Potter, the owner, showed his lease and title to the premises several times to the said colonel, and his quarter-master; by which they understanding his right and title, the colonel asked him if he would sell, and what he would have for it. But that he could not yield to, knowing what other use the lease was intended and used for; the low room being our meeting place, he could not in good conscience shut his Friends out of the same.

But being by force kept out of our meeting house and property, as before related, we had no other way to have the same restored, but by application to the king; and also for our meeting place at the Savoy, in the Strand. Whereupon myself and my friend Gilbert Latey were desired to attend the king; unto which we gave up, I being prepared to vindicate our property, especially in our meeting house at Park afore-

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said. When we had sent notice to the king of our desire to attend him in this case, and that he would please to appoint the time when, he granted our request therein.

On the 1st of the 10th month, 1686, Gilbert Latey and myself went to Whitehall, and attended some time when we had sent word up to the king of our waiting for admittance. After some time he came down to us, and the said colonel Hailes only with him.

After I had a little introduced and opened our case to him, how our said meeting house at Park was detained from us, I found that he had been misinformed and prepossessed; as if that meeting house and others were forfeited to him on the Conventicle act. I presently showed him the mistake; for by that act the owners' houses where meetings were held, were not forfeited, but they fineable; the penalty was fines, not forfeiture of houses; and yet, as I told him, I hoped he would not take advantage against us upon that act, seeing he had intimated his opinion was for liberty of conscience, from persecution.

He farther alleged, that John Potter had given his consent to part with the said house for a compensation; as also the colonel affirmed, having given the king in his hand the notes he had taken out of John's lease, showing the con-

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veyance of the title from one to another, till it was settled on John Potter. But the king told me, (as the colonel had informed him,) that since John had assented to part with the said meeting house for a compensation, we had had a meeting about it, and that our Friends had persuaded John not to sell it.

To all which I gave answer, that John Potter never appeared of that mind to us, as to sell it. I farther told him, that divers of our meeting houses in London were seized, and the broad arrow set upon the doors, pretendedly for the king, in the reign of king Charles the Second, and particularly our meeting house in Grace-church street; where the mayor, &c. encouraged a priest of the Church of England, to read their mass or liturgy and to preach; which was such a wonder that a priest should come and read Common Prayer and preach in a Quaker's meeting, that people did so numerously gather and crowd into and about the meeting, that afterward at another meeting, the priest came to be so affrighted with their crowding and noise, that he got away and forbore coming again to read or preach in our meeting house.

The king smiled at my mentioning their mass, because I presume he understood that the book of Common Prayer was much of it taken out of his mass book.

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Having taken notes out of our Friends' lease of the said meeting house at Park, I demonstrated the title, and pleaded the property against the said colonel Hailes's pretensions or claim to it.

After pretty much discourse upon this matter, the king several times gave this answer: "I am resolved to invade no man's property or conscience." And he told us, he would look further into the title and inform himself, but that at present he could not spare the place because of his guards.

Our friend Gilbert Latey spake also to the king about the Savoy meeting house; our Friends being there kept out in a cold yard, for many weeks, by the guards. Whereupon Gilbert requested the king to grant our Friends their liberty to meet twice a week; it being winter time, and hard for ancient people to stand abroad in the cold. The king did not refuse his request, but was pleased to delay it for a time, for further consideration.

However our solicitous endeavours in God's power and counsel, took such effect upon the king, that in a few week's after, he caused both our meeting houses aforesaid, viz. at Park and Savoy, to be restored to us.

Before we parted from the king that time, I mentioned to him our Friends' great sufferings

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in Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire, by Smith the informer, and two or three petty justices that took his part; and I entreated two or three lines from the lord Sunderland to the duke of Newcastle, to put a stop to the said informer. The king freely granted my request, and two or three times promised to speak to the lord Sunderland, to write to the duke of Newcastle for the same purpose. After which one of the lords of the council, at my desire, undertook to procure a letter forthwith, from the earl of Sunderland, pursuant to the king's promise before mentioned. Our Friends, and John Edge also, were concerned to attend the result thereof; insomuch that through the power and help of the Lord our God, in our endeavours, a general stop to those persecuting devourers, the informers, was obtained, to the great comfort and relief of our suffering Friends throughout the nation; whom I was greatly comforted in serving to the utmost of my ability.

George Whitehead now felt himself concerned to visit the king, to encourage him in the good work he had begun in regard to liberty of conscience, and to intimate the good effects which he apprehended had arisen from it. He also wished to lay before him some cases of suffering at Leeds in Yorkshire; and he and Gilbert

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Latey obtained admittance into the king's presence, on the 14th of 10th month, 1687. The king appeared glad to see them, and the substance of their discourse was as follows.

George Whitehead. "We are glad to see the king, and heartily wish the king health and happiness and a happy and prosperous reign, and that his government may be easy to him in all respects, that is, to himself and the people."

King. "I thank you; and for your parts, I believe well of you and your Friends, and that you do wish me well."

George Whitehead. "I desired to have attended the king some time since, but that a long journey this summer into the north parts of England, and some sickness since, prevented. We have daily cause to bless God for the mercy we enjoy under the king, as being made instrumental in the hand of God therein, and daily to pray for the king's preservation.

"In this late journey I have been as far as Cumberland, and other parts of the north of England, and find the good effects of the king's declaration for liberty of conscience, and how well it is received by all good people, by all who are sober, moderate, and rational."

King. "It is well received by all good Christians I am sure."

George Whitehead. "And I find persons of

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understanding and quality, do commend the king's prudence and conduct therein. And many innocent families, who have been sorely distressed by the late persecutions and hardships they have long been under, have received such relief through the king's clemency, that they find cause daily to pray for the king; and to him may justly apply the words of that just man Job, in this case, respecting the justness of his proceeding, and to say of the king: 'Thou hast broke the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth.' *Job* xxix. 17. And farther, that by thy declaration for liberty of conscience, thou hast yielded submission to the great God, and granted and given to Him his due therein, namely, that God may rule and bear sway in men's consciences, whose sovereign right it is to reign and bear rule therein: 'And when the Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; and when the evil beasts of prey are made to cease out of the land, the earth shall yield her increase:' according as God's holy prophets have testified."

King. "It is very true."

George Whitehead. "Let liberty of conscience be vindicated or maintained, and the good effects thereof will appear more and more," &c.

King. "I am resolved to maintain it as long

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as I live, and make it as firm as a magna charta, and more firm if possible; that it may remain for the benefit of future ages and that posterity may not have cause to alter it."

George Whitehead. "Whenever the king shall please to call a parliament, we do heartily wish it may be such a parliament as may concur with the king's clemency, according to his declaration for liberty of conscience, and confirm it by a law;* and for our parts, I hope we shall contribute our endeavours, so far as argument and reason will go, or may prevail, to persuade them to confirm it and give it the sanction of law, and repeal those penal laws which are against that liberty."

King. "You have a right to election of members of parliament: I would have your Friends to have a care, that they do not give their voices for such that are against liberty of conscience."

George Whitehead. "It concerns us all to have a care of that; it is certain there can be no free parliament, upon a general and free election, whilst the oaths of supremacy and allegiance and tests, are made the qualifications of all members of parliament; for such qualifications admit none to be members of parliament,

* This was on occasion of something spoken by the king, in a former discourse to the same purpose.

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but such as are strict Churchmen for conformity. Whereas a mixt or more equally chosen parliament, are most likely to consider all interests, and to establish liberty of conscience; which those penal laws allow not."

King. "Those laws and qualifications are against property, and destructive to it," &c.

George Whitehead. "By a mixed parliament I meant, consisting of Dissenters and of such Churchmen as are against persecution; as the grand jury at Hertford assizes, who stopped all the presentments against dissenters for twenty pounds a month, some time before the king's declaration for liberty of conscience came forth. This mixed grand jury appeared a fit instance or example, as I thought, in this case relating to a free parliament," &c.

King. "You know when I was duke of York, how envious many were against me, and how monstrously they pictured me in their pamphlets, to render me odious to the nation, and what a dangerous successor I should be, &c.; but in point of Christianity, I freely forgive them all."

George Whitehead. "That is a great point of Christianity and charity indeed, freely to forgive injuries, and is generous and noble; and I am truly glad to hear so much from the king. It is true the duke of York was such a formi-

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dable person in the thoughts of many, that they greatly feared and were jealous of his succeeding: but now, since come to the crown, he has given such open demonstration of his clemency and good will to the people, as has convinced many of their mistake therein, and given them cause to lay aside their former fears and jealousies of that kind."

King. "I was always of the same judgment for liberty of conscience, that now I have declared publicly. I remember when, about twenty years ago or above, I was at Tunbridge, though I never drank the waters, there was one Owen, John Owen, a dissenter, * who had a mind to speak with me, but was or seemed something bashful or fearful of coming to me, until some acquainted me therewith; and then I gave him liberty to come and speak with me, and told him my opinion, that it was for liberty of conscience as I have now declared," &c.

George Whitehead. "I have heard as much a great while ago, from Edward Waller, Esq who is lately dead; he signified to the same

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* Dr. Owen. The king little thought that in the company of this *one Owen*, he conversed with a man whose name would stand much higher in the respectful remembrance of posterity than his own, and whose writings were likely to be read with interest, so long as the English language remained to be the vehicle of Christian instruction. *Editor.*

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purpose, concerning the duke of York's being of that opinion for liberty of conscience, long since," &c.

Gilbert Latey. "That which the king has signified secretly he has now declared openly, to the comforting the hearts of many thousands, who truly bless God for the king's kindnesses, and return hearty thanks to the king for the same; and for all the kindnesses thou hast shown to us, the Lord reward thee, and return thee a thousand fold into thy own bosom."

King. "I thank you heartily."

George Whitehead. "I have one particular case from Leeds in Yorkshire, which our Friends desired me to acquaint the king withal; and that is, the magistrates of Leeds, in the late persecutions, were more severe to our Friends than any magistrates in all the county of York besides. At Leeds, they have not only imprisoned them and endeavoured to banish them out of the land, having prosecuted them in order to banishment, on the statute of the 13th and 14th of the late king, which extends to imprisonment and transportation, but also they took away their goods from their religious meetings, and do still keep the goods of one person or more unsold, and refuse to restore the goods to the respective owner or owners, when desired by our Friends concerned. Wherefore we entreat the king to

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speak to the lord president, to write two or three lines to the mayor and aldermen of Leeds, to cause them to restore the goods to the respective owners." And thereupon George Whitehead delivered the case in writing to the king.

King. "I'll do it; I'll speak to my lord Sunderland to write as you desire." Which accordingly he did, and an order was the next day taken out for restitution of the said goods.

George Whitehead. "We thankfully acknowledge the king's kindness in this case also," &c.

Gilbert Latey. "We pray God reward the king into his bosom, for all his favours and kindnesses; and grant him, if it be His will, long life and a happy reign here, and a crown of immortal glory hereafter."

George Whitehead. "We sincerely desire it," &c.

King. "I thank you heartily."

The liberty given by king James II. to his dissenting subjects was, in the year 1687, confirmed by a general declaration for liberty of conscience; by which free leave was given to all to meet and serve God after their own way and manner, whether in private houses or places purposely provided for that use; and all manner of penal laws in matters ecclesiastical, for not coming to Church, or for any other nonconfor-

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mity to the established religion, were suspended by the king's sole authority. Although in this declaration the king expresses his wish, that all his subjects were members of the Catholic Church, yet he says :

"We humbly thank Almighty God, it is and hath of long time been our constant sense and opinion, which upon divers occasions we have declared, that conscience ought not to be constrained, nor people forced in matters of mere religion : it has ever been directly contrary to our inclination, as we think it is to the interest of government; which it destroys by spoiling trade, depopulating countries, and discouraging strangers; and, finally, that it never obtained the end for which it was employed."

George Whitehead appears to have placed confidence in the king's sincerity ; and perhaps he also thought, if the king succeeded in gaining admission for many of his Romish friends to offices even in the Established Church, that he would be able to support his views in regard to liberty of conscience.* "As for us," he says,

* It had been too obvious that the name of a protestant establishment was no security against one of the worst features of popery—*persecution ;* and had the king succeeded in his wishes, it is highly probable that, in the state of parties, he could have supported himself only by a general toleration of his protestant subjects ; it was not, at any rate, surprizing, that those who had

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"the people commonly called Quakers, and our ministers, having no such revenues as tithes, hire, or wages for preaching to lose, our Gospel being free, we were not so afraid of popery or a popish prince and clergy, as those who enjoy those great revenues which the popish Church and priesthood claim, and would gladly possess.

"The king having often seriously declared liberty of conscience to be his principle and persuásion, and we who had long deeply suffered partaking thereof, especially in the latter part of his reign, had great reason to be the more easy and thankful that we had some relief from those extreme hardships we had long suffered under.

"Howbeit, the king's aforesaid declaration not having the sanction of an act of parliament

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suffered so severely under the protestant establishment, should take this view of the subject, and perhaps underrate the danger which attended the king's designs. There is no doubt however, that many members of the Society, at that time, viewed with serious alarm the consequences to the country of the establishment of a *popish prince and clergy*, and who sincerely hailed that ever memorable providence, by which the truly protestant William and Mary were placed without bloodshed on the throne of England. To their reign, as Besse remarks in the preface to his book of Quaker Sufferings, "was reserved the glory of establishing to protestant dissenters, a general liberty of conscience in religious worship." *Editor.*

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for confirmation and continuance, we did not think our liberty secured to us thereby, any more than it was under the reign of his brother, king Charles the Second, but uncertain and precarious as it was before; when we had only that king's specious promises and declarations, which lasted but a little while, and were soon made void by the parliament and himself, and the many persecutors let loose upon us again, because the same liberty granted was not passed into a law."

George Whitehead does not think it his business to treat of the particular causes of the king's removal from the throne; they are, says he, "matters of state and government." He piously refers the whole affair to the counsels of "the Divine Majesty, the Searcher of Hearts, by whom the intentions and designs of men and princes are foreseen and known, who rules over the kingdoms of men and gives them to whomsoever He will."

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SECTION XVIII.

Proceedings in the reign of William and Mary—Respecting the act of toleration.—The case of Friends suffering for contempts, &c.—The obtaining of an act for the admission of the solemn affirmation of Friends instead of an oath.

George Whitehead introduces his account of his own and his Friends' proceedings in the early part of the reign of William and Mary, with the following review.

The great and merciful providence of the Lord God Almighty towards us his people, is worthy to be for ever remembered. He gave us not over to the will of our enemies, who often breathed out cruelty against us, threatening our ruin and desolation; blessed be our God! who hath frustrated their cruel designs and restrained the remainder of their wrath, and contrary thereunto hath carried on his own work and prospered the same, to his own praise and his people's comfort; causing all to work together for good, to all them who truly love his Name and Power: blessed for ever be the same!

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Although for the space of about twenty-five years, from 1660 to 1684, we had but small respite from some kind of persecution or other, notwithstanding the liberty of conscience so often promised and declared from the throne; yet the Truth lost no ground, but gained through all. The persecution time was a seed time, for the Truth and Gospel of Christ Jesus which we suffered for, and the faithful grew and multiplied. The good seed of the Gospel being sown and planted, the same increased and spread even in those suffering times, which neither the devil nor his instruments could ever root out. That Divine Presence attended us in our many deep sufferings, which reached and tenderly affected many hearts and souls, as they beheld and observed the patience and innocence wherein the Lord sustained us in our many trials and sufferings, whereby many were not only moved with compassion to us, but also to enquire after the Lord and his Truth, the cause for which we patiently suffered. As the more Israel was afflicted and oppressed under Pharaoh in Egypt, the more they multiplied and grew; so as the Lord's people have been persecuted and oppressed in this Gospel day, the more their number has increased and they multiplied; wherein still the merciful Providence of Almighty God has appeared, to frustrate the evil

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designs of ungodly persecutors and wicked men.

And moreover it is very remarkable and memorable, how the Lord God by his wisdom and power has appeared and wrought for his people, in gradually making way for that liberty of conscience so greatly laboured for; insomuch that the understandings of many in outward government, even of the supreme in authority, have been so far enlightened, as to see that liberty from persecution is not only most equal and consistent with a Christian spirit and temper, but also with their own safety and the peace of the government and nation. Yea, I have heard it declared by a great person of the Church of England, as in the name or person of the Church, viz. "Neither we nor you are safe without the toleration." And many that have formerly had a hand in persecution, are now willing that former sin of theirs should be covered, that they may be esteemed sincere for liberty of conscience against persecution. Others, even persons of note, have gloried and seemed to rejoice, in that they never had a hand in persecution, nor signed a warrant against any of us; it being generally, by men ingenuous and sober, deemed scandalous or a brand of infamy to be accounted a persecutor.

Hitherto then as the Lord our God hath been

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graciously pleased to help us through many deep sufferings, hardships, and trials, He hath also been at work in the hearts of men in power; and in order to give his churches among us rest, He prepared the heart of the government, after the revolution, to allow us the sanction of a law for our liberty, together with other dissenting protestants, respecting our religious exercise in our public assemblies.

And therefore now I may give some brief account of the said act, and how I and others of our Friends were concerned about the same. It commonly goes by the title of "The Act of Toleration;" but the real title is, "An Act for exempting their majesties' Protestant subjects, dissenting from the Church of England, from the penalties of certain laws." Anno primo Gulielma & Mariæ.

The preamble is, viz. "Forasmuch as some ease to scrupulous consciences, in the exercise of religion, may be an effectual means to unite their majesties' protestant subjects in interest and affection, be it enacted," &c.

This act contains much of the substance and divers clauses of the bill, entitled, "A bill of ease to all Protestant Dissenters;" which was endeavoured to have been passed by the parliament in king Charles the Second's time, 1680

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and 1681, but not effected either in his reign or in his brother's succeeding, as before related.

After a bill was brought into the parliament in order to the aforesaid act, entitled, "An Act for exempting their majesties' protestant subjects," &c.; divers of our Friends, with myself, had great care and concern upon our minds, that it might be effectual and clear, without being clogged or perplexed with any snare in it; so that we might be truly eased from persecution and our religious liberties be uninterrupted.

Some of the terms in the said bill, required of protestant dissenters to prove themselves Christians, were, viz. "That all such who profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his Eternal Son, the true God, and in the Holy Spirit, coequal with the Father and the Son, one God, blessed for ever: and do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, to be the revealed will and word of God."

Although we knew when the parliament had thus granted liberty of conscience to dissenting protestants, in religious exercise, grounded upon this or the like reason, namely, for the increase of charity among Christians, and that no person or persons professing the protestant religion, although dissenting from the Church of England, should be disquieted or called in question for

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the same, that it was very fair and plausible: yet to prevent any such from being stumbled or ensnared by some expressions in the aforesaid profession or creed which appeared unscriptural in the said bill, we, instead thereof, did propose and humbly offer, as our own real belief of the Deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, viz. "I profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his Eternal Son, the true God, and in the Holy Spirit, one God, blessed for ever: and do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, to be given by Divine Inspiration."

This declaration John Vaughton and I delivered to Sir Thomas Clergis, who, with some others, were desirous we should give in such confession of our Christian belief, that we might not lie under the unjust imputation of being no Christians, nor thereby be deprived of the benefit of the intended law for our religious liberty. We were therefore of necessity put upon offering the said confession, it being also our known professed principle, sincerely to confess Christ the Son of the Living God, his Divinity, and as He is the Eternal Word; and that the Three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, are One: One Divine Being, One God, blessed for ever.

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Moreover, the said Sir Thomas Clergis, being satisfied with our confession aforesaid, delivered unto him, moved for the same before a grand committee of the whole house of commons, mentioning some of our names from whom he had the said confession; whereupon we were called into the house, and some other Friends, as William Mead and John Osgood, that the committee might have our confession from ourselves, and the parliament be the better satisfied therewith in hearing us: so that I had then occasion to answer the committee very clearly and to their satisfaction, both as to our really owning the Deity, and the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as given forth by Divine Inspiration. The last being most in question, we gave them such plain and clear satisfaction, both as to the holy doctrine contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament and to the historical parts thereof, as being preserved by Divine Providence to us; that I clearly perceived our confession and testimony had such influence and effect upon the spirit of the parliament, that it made for the furtherance of the said bill, in order to bring it into an act.

Some of the members would have had it made but a temporary act, for three years; in which I opposed them, and showed the unreasonable-

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ness of such a limitation of our religious liberty, urging that it ought to be perpetual. So after much labour and attending on our parts, the bill was passed.

Although under the early reign of king William the Third, we had so far obtained liberty by law, as to enjoy our religious meetings for the worship of God peaceably; yet there remained many of our Friends prisoners, and under prosecution by priests and others, for nonpayment of tithes, and many of them detained in prisons, chiefly upon contempts, as their term is, for not answering upon oath to the priests' bills and plaints, &c.

These cases being considered among us, after I had impartially stated and drawn them up, our Friends agreed to have them presented to the king, that he might both understand their cases and suffering, for not paying tithes and not swearing.

Our Friends thereupon desiring me to present the case to the king, and to take with me three or four of our Friends whom I pleased, that were free thereto, I accepted of that service; being always willing to serve and help suffering Friends, as I had been in the two kings' reigns before, according to my ability and as the Lord was pleased to enable me.

Whereupon I desired my ancient companion

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in solicitation, Gilbert Latey, with Thomas Lower the doctor, John Taylor of York, my late brother-in-law, and our friend Daniel Quare, to accompany me to the king. Daniel Quare being known to the king, which the rest of us then were not, we sent him in to procure our access into his presence. The king inquired of him "who we were, and in what station or places among our people?" Daniel told him, "We were ministers and elders among us."

The king then sent for us into a little private apartment, where he was alone, and I presented our case, which I desired him favourably to accept; which he did. He inquired of us, what places we belonged to? or to what congregations we did minister? Which gave me good occasion to answer him, "that we were not settled as ministers or pastors over any particular congregations, but visited our Friends' meetings in divers places, as the Lord inclined us: for we do not make a gain of our ministry; we do not take stipends or hire for preaching; but preach the Gospel freely, according to Christ's command to his ministers: 'Freely ye have received, freely give,' &c." The king gave no reply, but appeared very serious and satisfied with my answer.

I proffered to read our case to him; he said, "Nay, he would read it himself;" seeming

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rather willing to hear us in discourse than read at that time.

I thereupon acquainted him, that the chief of our Friends' sufferings then was, because they cannot make their answers to the priest's suits for tithes upon oath, which for conscience' sake they refused in any case; and no less for conscience' sake do they refuse the payment of tithes, whereby the priests take great advantage against our Friends, to run them to contempts and imprisonments, and to make seizures upon their goods and estates, &c. wherefore we had applied to the parliament for relief in the case of oaths, that they might not be imposed upon us in any case; we offering to submit to the penalty of perjury, in case any of us were found false or corrupt in our evidence or testimonies given without oath. But our applications to the parliament had not taken effect as desired, it being sometimes prorogued or otherwise dismissed, before we could get our case through both houses.

This our case of conscience in refusing to swear, I told the king, was the same with the people's called Menists in the Low Countries, as it was a matter of conscience to them; to whom his predecessors gave liberty that their word, in attesting the truth in courts, &c. might be accepted instead of an oath, which is

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what we desire: and therefore when we might see it a season to apply again to the parliament for relief in this case, I desired the king to stand our friend and favourably to recommend our case to some leading members of parliament; which he seriously promised he would do.

And accordingly he did perform his promise, as we had account from some of the friendly members of parliament; one of whom in particular told me, he was present with the king and one of the house of lords, and heard them discourse about the Quakers; and how the king pleaded on their behalf, contrary to some objections that lord made against them; which were, that they were disaffected to the government. And that the king answered him: "My lord, I am not of your opinion; for there is an honest people among them." Thus much the said member, Sir John Austin, told me.

I also remember in the discourse I had with the king, when I answered him in several things before mentioned, relating to our conscience and Christian testimony, he made this objection, viz.: "You are a divided people." I told him: "No; as we are a people we are not divided, but in union: although there are some who have separated or gone out from us, and therefore are not of us, as there were of old some who separated and went out from the

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primitive Christians; yet we remain a people in unity, that is, of the same faith and profession." To which our friend John Taylor added: "Such as turned into separation or division from us, were some disorderly persons, who therefore were denied by us;" or to that very effect. And I farther added: "That I had known the people called Quakers from the first; and, as a people, they were still the same as to faith and principle, which allows not of division or separation."

"The king replied to this effect, viz.: "But some among you are disaffected to the government."

I answered: "It is a hard matter for us to enter into the private affections of persons, without some overt act; we do not know that any of our Friends have manifested disaffection to the government; for if we did certainly know that any of those in communion with us, should by any overt act, in word or deed, show any disaffection to the present government, we should certainly disown them therein, and give testimony against them. It is true, we have of late been aspersed, and misrepresented with such nicknames as Meadites and Pennites, as if we set up sect-masters among us; yet we own no such thing; but Christ Jesus to be our only Master, as we are a Christian society and peo-

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ple." The king appeared well satisfied with my answer, and with the rest of our discourse; being very serious in his attention to the matters proposed unto him.

I must confess I had very great satisfaction and freedom of spirit, to open divers weighty matters relating to our principles and testimony; and I had therein the more freedom, because he was seriously attentive to hear and receive information concerning us.

Near the conclusion I proposed to the king, that inasmuch as the lord keeper, viz. the lord Somers, knew the laws, and how far the king might safely extend his prerogative, particularly in the case we had delivered, if he pleased we would deliver him a copy thereof, that he might be the better prepared to give advice in our case, what way the king might release our Friends who were prisoners upon contempts, as set forth in the said case. The king answered: "You may deliver it (that is, a copy) to him; for I'll speak with my lord keeper about it." After our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the king's kindness to us and our suffering Friends, we withdrew.

The next day, or soon after we had been with the king, our friend John Edge went with me to the said lord keeper, with a copy of the case, which I thus introduced when I gave it: I told

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him, we had presented the case to the king, and having heard a good character of thyself, (I being then little acquainted with him,) we made bold to mention thee to the king for counsel in this case, how our Friends who are prisoners upon contempts might be released; and the king told us, he would speak with the lord keeper about it.

The lord keeper took it kindly, showing not only his own desire our suffering Friends should be released and enjoy their liberties, but also freely signified to us, that the king was really for liberty of conscience to dissenters, and that it was his real principle; which we were very glad to hear from him, being a person of honour and credit.

In a very short time after the case of the suffering Friends had been presented to the king and lord keeper, there came out an act of grace, in the year 1695, pardoning contempts, &c. whereupon about forty of our Friends were discharged out of the prisons.

Though the prisoners were then set free, the laws by which they had suffered remained in force, and would doubtless soon have supplied the prisons again, if successful means had not been used to obtain a law by which the affirmation of Friends might be received instead of an

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oath. The time seemed now arrived when such a proposal might be safely made to the legislature by the Society; and George Whitehead, as usual, appears to have taken the most active part in the solicitation of the measure. He inserts in his memoirs a very particular account of the proceedings.

A case was drawn up, stating clearly the grounds of the Society's scruple against oaths, namely, that it was purely a case of conscience, resting on their understanding of Christ's words; which in common with many ancient martyrs in the early periods of the Christian Church, they believed to forbid swearing in all cases. They declared themselves ready to answer the just and good ends of law and government, as a peaceable people fearing God; stated the grievance under which they laboured from refusing to swear, both in their persons and estates; and concluded with the following request, viz.: "That in all cases where *oaths* are imposed and swearing required, our word, that is, our solemn affirmation or denial *as in the fear and presence of God*, may be accepted instead of an *oath*; for which we humbly offer and freely submit, that if any be found false in such their affirmation, that then such penalty be inflicted on the person so

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offending, as law and justice require in case of false swearing or perjury."

It is evident from the statement made of the grievances endured by the Society on account of their religious scruple, that they must have more or less affected nearly all its members; and their patient and unostentatious suffering under their remaining trials, is a valuable testimony to the continued faith and piety of the Society.

They were disabled from recovering debts by legal process; from defending their titles and properties; from being witnesses in courts of judicature; and from proving wills or taking administration. Their young men were not allowed their freedom in cities and corporations, when they had served their apprenticeships; and in many places they were debarred the exercise of their right as freeholders, in the election of magistrates and members of parliament.

A petition embodying a brief statement of their case and wishes, was presented to the house of commons on the 7th of the 12th month, 1695. It was followed by a motion for leave to bring in a bill, that "*the solemn affirmation and negation or denial of the Quakers, might be accepted instead of an oath, &c.*" The motion was carried by a large majority:

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"Whereupon," says George Whitehead, "many of the members came out to us, with great joy, love, and tenderness, and showed their satisfaction that they had so well gained the point for us."

George Whitehead gives the following account of his and his Friends proceedings in this important business.

Leave being given to bring in a bill, according to our petition, several draughts were prepared; the first by counsellor Conyers, which was something long, yet he took some pains in it, to answer what we requested in our petition, particularly about our solemn affirmation, &c. to be accepted instead of taking an oath, and to exempt us from swearing. In his bill, he stated the matter, that the Quaker's should solemnly declare the truth, in like manner and form of words, as are used by all other persons who are required to declare the same, except only the attestation thereof upon oath; that is, the words swear, and, so help me God, &c. to be omitted. But then to make our attestation, affirmation, or negation, so solemn as was expected from us by the parliament, in courts of justice, &c. it was the opinion of most of our friends in parliament, that there must be some solemn or sacred expressions, religiously respecting

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God, as solemnly to declare the truth in his presence: which we durst not gainsay, least we should be deemed atheistical; it being our principle, that God is omnipresent, and omniscient also.

However, as in a multitude of counsel there is safety, we discoursed the point with several ingenuous men of the house of commons, that we might proceed with what safety and success we could. We went particularly to Sir Francis Wynington, an ancient, able counsel, who greatly stood our friend; and we showed him counsellor Conyer's draught of the said bill, which, upon perusal, sir Francis judged much too long, and that it would be the more tedious and difficult to get it through the house, into an act; adding this reason, that it had better be too short, than too long, that the committee might have the amending of it, and then they would be the more willing to pass it; whereupon he drew up a short bill, but would not insert therein the bare words, yea or nay, for attestation in courts of justice: and to offer the same in the house of commons, in a bill, for an act of parliament, his opinion was, would be laughed at, or ridiculed and rejected.

Many others were of the same mind, that such expressions, or terms, must be offered in

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the bill, as might appear solemn, or sacred, whether in affirmation or negation; as to declare, in the presence of God, to an answer or evidence, &c. Their forms of oaths, and swearing, having been of such long standing, and such great stress and obligation laid upon them, for many hundred years, that it was a very difficult point, and a great thing to gain any such variation from them, as conscientiously to declare, or affirm, in the presence of Almighty God, instead of the imprecation oath, of, "so help me God;" and the ceremony of handling, and kissing the bible.

To obtain such a great alteration from an oath, and imprecation, to a plain solemn affirmation, as before, was indeed a great point, as many of our Friends were very sensible of, and thankful for, when it was gained.

The bill as drawn up by sir Francis Wynington, was read the 17th of 12th month (February) 1695, the first time. Read again the 3rd of the 1st month 1665, a second time; and committed: the same day the committee met. For its being committed 130 votes, against it 68; more for it, than against it 62.

The 4th of the 1st month, the committee met again and passed the bill. The 10th of the 1st month, ordered it to be engrossed: and the 13th day, the bill passed the house of commons, by

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146 voices for it, and 99 against it; 47 more yeas than noes; and the same day it was carried to the house of lords, where it was read twice; but the opposition some members of that house made to us herein, did occasion our longer attendance, and labour to inform them rightly of our case, and the necessity of our being relieved. Upon my reasoning with divers of the peers who had opposed us herein, I did so far convince them, that they were changed in judgment and opinion concerning us, and did appear for us in this our case; insomuch that I was daily sensible, the hand of the Lord our God, that was with us in our industrious endeavours, made way and did work for us therein.

To Him be the glory of all for ever!

To incline the house of peers to grant relief from our sufferings for not swearing, our case was reprinted, and presented with several reasons subjoined; and among others, this following, viz.

We also propose to your serious consideration, that this moderation to persons scrupling to swear, hath had good effects in our neighbouring countries, as above one hundred years' experience hath manifested, in the following instance: on the 26th day of January 1577, Guillaume de Nassau, prince of Orange, and

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stadtholder of Holland, Zealand, &c. with the consent of the government and council, sent his mandate to the magistrates, commanding (on behalf of the people called Menists, who refused to swear in any case) that their yea should be accepted, and taken instead of an oath, they being subject, in case of falsifying the truth, to the pains of perjury.

In the year 1593, prince Maurice, son of the former prince, with the consent of the states, gave forth a placard or mandate, in behalf of the Menists, to the same effect, &c.

Upon these passages of the Menists having this liberty to be exempted from taking an oath, upon their yea, there was this quotation in the margin of the second impression, viz. "G. Burnet's History of the Reformation in the Low Countries, part I. p. 587, 588."

Whereupon some of the temporal lords told me, that the bishop of Salisbury had taken occasion to exclaim against the Quakers openly, in the house of lords, for falsly quoting his name as author of the said history. Whereby I was somewhat surprized, and told the lords I would make enquiry about the mistake; and quickly searching the first impression, found it to be a literal mistake of the printer; for in the first, it is G. Brant's history, not Burnet's. I went the next day and showed the same, as

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first printed, to two of the said lords, that is, the earl of Carbery and earl of Marlborough, desiring them to call the said bishop out, that I might show him where the mistake was; which they did, and then I plainly showed the bishop, that it was a literal mistake of the printer, and that the Quakers could have no design to misrepresent him in the quotation; neither could the literal mistake be any great disparagement to him, to be rendered the author of such a noted or esteemed history of the reformation. And therefore I hoped he would pardon the mistake, so as not to charge us therewith; which he cheerfully granted, making then but slight thereof. Thereupon I wished him to be our friend, with respect to the bill depending before the house of lords, to relieve us from oaths. He objected that the name of God was not mentioned in it, viz. solemnly to bear witness in the presence of God; and if we did not allow of that, he would be against us; but if "the presence of God" was in it, he promised he would be for us.

I told him, those solemn expressions, "In the presence of God," were in the bill as it came from the house of commons, I was sure; desiring him to go in and see the bill, that he might satisfy himself of the truth thereof; so he went into the house of lords to see the bill, and

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quickly came forth again to us, standing with the two temporal lords; and he then said, "it was true as I had told him, 'the presence of God' was mentioned in the bill." The earl of Carbery told him: "Then you were mistaken, my Lord." Whereupon I said to him, I hoped he would now be for the bill, and be present when it was read a second time. He promised before the two lords he would; but was not, being absent the day it was moved; of which notice was taken by them and others. Howbeit the Lord our Heavenly Father stood by us and helped us, and inclined many of those in power to help forward the case for our relief.

On the 15th of the 2nd month, called April, 1696, the bill was read a second time, and committed to a committee of the whole house, and then some debate held a while, chiefly about a solemn declaration instead of an oath; some of them not willing it should pass in those general and solemn expressions, as sent up from the house of commons, viz. their solemn affirmation or declaration, to be in the presence of Almighty God. But some of the bishops, &c. urging some other words to be added, as

1. I call God to witness and judge, &c.
2. As witness and judge, &c.
3. I call God to record upon my soul, and appeal to God as Judge, &c.

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Whereupon divers of the temporal lords came out several times (we waiting at several doors and ways into the house of lords) to discourse about those words some of the bishops would have had put upon us; to all which, as I told some of them at first, our soliciting and petitioning to be freed from the imposition and burthen of all oaths, was not to have any new oath to be imposed upon us; for if their be any imprecation, appealing to, or invocating God as judge or avenger, &c. it would be construed to be an oath, or of the nature of an oath.

Upon this and the like exceptions, some of those lords who were most friendly to us returned into the house, to discourse farther with the bishops, &c. when they perceived how tender and careful we were, not to be imposed upon in any thing contrary to our consciences. After they had further discoursed in the committee with those bishops, &c. they came out again to us in the lobby, where a few of us were attending under a true Christian care and fear towards Almighty God: and those lords who came out to us, and showed most care and kindness to us, urged, that inasmuch as the bishops were caught upon these words, to be added to the word God, viz. "the Witness of the truth of what I say," as containing no imprecation nor invocation of God, as Judge or Avenger,

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&c.; those lords that were most our friends, were very earnest that we would admit of the addition of the words which they proposed to be added, rather than to lose our bill or have it thrown out; forasmuch as God is really witness to the truth sincerely declared, He being omniscient as well as omnipresent. Then seeing the bishops were argued out of their first proposition, of calling God to witness and judge, &c.; the matter was left to them that then appeared our friends, and were really kind to us, with this caution, not to exceed these words which they had obtained concession to, viz. "the Witness of the truth." Whereupon they constrained the bishops so as not to exceed them, by any imprecation, invocation, or appeal to God, as Judge, Avenger, &c.

After report made of their amendments by the committee of the lords' house, the bill was passed, with this following form of a solemn affirmation inserted in it, and agreed unto by the house of peers, where it was formed, viz.: "I, A. B., do declare in the presence of Almighty God, the Witness of the truth of what I say."*

* This declaration was by the act made to have the force of an oath in all cases except those included in the following provision: "That no Quaker shall by this act be qualified to

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With some few additions in the bill the same day, they returned the bill to the house of commons; who on the 17th of the said 2nd

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give evidence in any criminal causes, or serve on any juries, or bear any office or place of profit in the government." . . . . .

. The terms of the affirmation were far from being satisfactory to many Friends. The *dissatisfied*, considered the definition of an oath to be *a solemn appeal to God, as to the truth of any declaration*; and in this sense they believed it to be forbidden in the New Testament. It appears from the remarks of George Whitehead, that those who were *satisfied* with the affirmation as granted in the act, though they would have preferred a simpler form, looked upon the imprecation in the conclusion of the usual form of the oath, and the holding and kissing the book, as constituting the objectionable parts of the act. It is not my business here to discuss the question of which party took the more correct view; but as a circumstance in the history of our present privileges, it seems worthy of notice, that the dissatisfaction which prevailed with the allowed form, led to the continuance of suffering in several instances, and to much painful discussion in the church. Thomas Story, who was himself a dissentient, and a sufferer for being so, has preserved in his journal many particulars relative to this subject, and the following passage from his work, will, I think, be interesting to the reader, in connexion with George Whitehead's account.

Under the date of 1715, after speaking of the Yearly Meeting, he says: "As the affirmation, from the beginning of it, had occasioned much disturbance in the church, some being for, and some against it; so these divisions had ever been very oppressive to my spirit, as knowing nothing could hurt us more than that, or give satan or evil men more advantage against us: but though, from its first birth, I never liked it, yet I ever kept true charity to those Friends who were for it, as believing they saw no hurt in it, though, I thought, I did; and, at my com-

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month, called April, agreed to the lords' amendments; and on the 20th of the same month, the said bill was sent up again to the house of

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ing over to London, I laboured among them, to regain and keep a right temper one towards another: and, as they talked of a farther solicitation concerning it, (the late act being ready to expire,) I advised several leading men on both sides to proceed in one joint interest as one people; for though we could not all agree about the definition of an oath, or in what relation the affirmation stood to an oath; yet we all were as one man still, that an oath is not consistent with Christ's doctrine; and accordingly they did both solicit for a plain affirmation, without the Sacred Name at all: but that could not be obtained; all that the parliament would do, was to perpetuate the former, adding some clauses for the levying of tithes. When this came to be discoursed in the meeting, the minds of some on both sides being heated, things were like to run high; but the Lord was near, and, by his blessed wisdom and power, preserved us in unity. Some few of these who were for the affirmation inclined to have it established over all, as the testimony of Truth by the Yearly Meeting; and some others, on the other side, were resolved to reject it, and testify against it, as short of the testimony of Truth: but seeing the tendency of such a division, I and some others laboured for peace; and, with much long-suffering, patience, and labour in the love and wisdom of Truth, and as it opened and made way, things came at last to this good issue, that such as could take the affirmation, might have the benefit of it without censure of their brethren, and such as could not take it, should not be reproached by them; but that the Meeting for Sufferings should continue their care and solicitations, together with the dissatisfied, for further ease in that point, at a fit season: and with this conclusion both sides were at last easy, and the meeting ended in more peace and brotherly kindness than for some years before, and to a more

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peers, agreed on, concluded, and confirmed by the king and both houses of parliament, as a temporary act, then to continue in force for

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general satisfaction; for which my soul was truly thankful, with many more."

The discussions were renewed at the Yearly Meetings for several succeeding years; and at last several Friends who were satisfied with the affirmation, as it had been granted by parliament, proposed that a fresh solicitation should take place, for such a form as should meet the wishes of their conscientious dissentient brethren. The proposal was adopted; and, in consequence, Thomas Story, with one or more of the other party, had interviews with the earl of Carlisle, the earl of Sunderland, the duke of Somerset, and several bishops; from whom they received friendly expressions of willingness to give ease to tender consciences in regard to the affirmation. The king, Geo. I., was also applied to, and appeared very friendly to the cause of liberty. A petition was addressed to parliament, in the year 1721, *praying for leave to bring in a bill for such form of affirmation, as might relieve the difficulties under which many members of the Society laboured, from their scruple to the usual form.* The house of commons readily granted the request, but it met a violent opposition in the house of lords, from many peers both temporal and spiritual. Atterbury, bishop of Rochester, said: "he did not know why such a distinguishing mark of indulgence should be allowed to a set of people who were *hardly Christians.*" When the bill came before the house, the archbishop of Canterbury moved, that the Quakers' affirmation might not be allowed in courts of judicature, except among themselves; and the archbishop of York moved for a clause, that the Quakers' affirmation should not go in any suit at law for tithes; but, after some debate, the question being put thereon, was carried in the negative by fifty-two voices against twenty-one; and the question being put in the house whether the bill should pass, it was

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seven years, from the 14th of May, 1696, and from thence to the end of the next session of parliament, according to the words of the act. The act was renewed again for eleven years, beginning the 22nd of November, 1702; at which time not being well in health, I could be but little with the other Friends in their attendance on the parliament in that concern.

In 1714 the act was made perpetual; and in 1721, as already stated at the conclusion of the last note, the form of the affirmation was altered so as to meet the wishes of the more scrupulous members of the Society.

The next point which claimed the particular attention of this vigilant guardian of the Society's interest, was connected with its scruple against tithes, &c. A bill was brought into parliament for the "better payment of church rates, small tithes, and other church dues; and the better passing churchwarden's accounts." The *better way* which the bill proposed, was giving new powers to the ecclesiastical courts.

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resolved in the affirmative. By this bill the affirmation was established in the simple form, I, *A. B.*, *do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm*, whereby ease and relief was extended universally to the members of this Society in respect to oaths. *Gough*, vol. iv. p. 190.

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It recited an act of Henry VIII. which *empowered* justices to commit to gaol, persons proved in the ecclesiastical courts to have obstinately and wilfully refused to pay their tithes; but it was now proposed to empower the ecclesiastical judge to determine all such matters absolutely: but with the true hypocrisy of a persecuting church, the civil magistrate was to be called upon, without the exercise of any discretion on his part, to issue out his warrant of distress, or if that was not to be found, to commit the party to prison.

The bill made its appearance in the house of lords; and having been referred to a committee, George Whitehead with seven other Friends were admitted, at their request, to state their objections to it. The bishop of London was the chairman; and having asked them what they had to except against the bill, George Whitehead spoke on behalf of the deputation, and he gives the following account of the interview.

I answered: "The same reason that is given in the act of parliament, in the 17th of king Charles the First, for the taking away the court commonly called the Star Chamber; and the power of the ecclesiastical commissioners, and their high commission court, being removed; because of their oppressive and arbitrary pro-

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ceedings, &c. upon the repeal of a branch of a statute, primo Elizabeth, concerning commissioners for causes ecclesiastical, 17 Charles I. cap. 10 and 11; it is conceived, with submission, that the same reasons may be alleged against the present bill giving such absolute power to the ecclesiastical courts, their judges and ordinaries, to give definite sentence and judgment, &c. that is, as therein described."

Bishop. "You except against the bill itself, &c.; what particulars do you object against?".

George Whitehead. "Observing divers particular clauses therein, it appears contrary to the great charter of England, that is magna charta, as the arbitrary and oppressive proceedings of the star chamber and high commission court were adjudged to be; and therefore they and their power or jurisdiction which they exercised, were justly taken away from them.

"By the present bill, the ecclesiastical judge or ordinary, is made the sole judge and determiner by his definitive sentence, concerning the penalties upon the persons and estates; and no appeal to any other or higher court, seems to be granted or allowed by it.

"The ecclesiastical judge and court commonly favour the plaintiff, that is, the vicar, priest, or curate, as a party for him, and there-

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fore appear not to be impartial judges in the case.

"And suppose the defendant be sued for a tithe-pig, goose, or hen, or a little orchard fruit, (that is, a few apples, pears, plums, or cherries, or the value thereof,) and the party for conscience' sake cannot pay the same, then must he or she be committed to prison for it? Surely there is no proportion between the punishment and the pretended offence; whereas punishments ought not to exceed the nature of the offence, they should be adapted to the quality and quantity of the offence; as it is a maxim in common law and justice, and in magna charta, for a greater offence a greater amercement; and for a lesser offence a lesser amercement. But if a person for conscience' sake cannot pay a tithe-pig, or goose, &c. the ecclesiastical court, judge or ordinary, by their certificate, will cause two justices to commit the person to jail, there to remain perhaps without bail or mainprize, until the court receive satisfaction, or until payment; which if he can never do, there he must remain under confinement till death; and his days may be soon shortened thereby, as many have been, by close confinement, causing sickness, &c."

One of the committee queried: "Which would you have then? do you choose rather to

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have your goods seized or distrained, than imprisonment of your persons ?"

George Whitehead answered : "Of two evils we had better suffer by the less, yet choose neither. If we must suffer for nonpayment of tithes, we would rather suffer the less penalty than the greater ; rather loss of goods than our liberties ; as it is a more easy suffering, to have the small tithes or a tenth taken away, than to be confined in prison all our life time.

"As to paying parish clerks or sextons, or to the fabrics of parochial churches, (so the bishop termed them,) we do not think it equal we should suffer for not paying to them, whom we do not employ ; and we do not require any of the Church of England to pay toward the repair of our meeting houses, they would not be so dealt by, &c."

The bishop reflected : "What, then, you compare your meeting houses to ours, which are established by law," &c. I replied : "We are thankful to the government, ours are now legally allowed by the late act of exemption or toleration, &c."

One of the lords temporal put this question to us, viz "But what reason have you in point of conscience, for your refusing to pay tithes ?"

I answered : "That is a serious and weighty question, and deserves such an answer, viz.

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the reason of our conscience in this case, is grounded upon and has respect unto our Lord Jesus Christ, his command in his commission to his ministers: 'Freely ye have received, freely give,' *Matt.* x. And to his changing the priesthood of Levi, and disannulling the commandment and their law for tithes, as is fully signified in the 7th chapter to the *Hebrews*. Therefore Christ's ministry is a free ministry, under the Gospel Dispensation, and not to be upheld by tithes or forced maintenance; and it is very manifest, that Christ changed the priesthood from the tribe of Levi to Himself, (as our great High Priest,) who came not of the tribe of Levi, but of the tribe of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood, *Heb.* vii. 14.

"And our refusing to pay tithes for conscience' sake, in these respects, in this Gospel day, and for these reasons, under the Gospel Dispensation, is no new or strange thing; for many eminent martyrs and reformers were of the same judgment with us, in this matter or testimony against tithes, in this Dispensation, &c."

And as I was then beginning to mention some of those martyrs, &c. as William Thorpe, Walter Brute, John Wickliff, &c. the said bishop being chairman, was pleased to inter-

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rupt me from proceeding further in my instances, and thus reflectingly turned upon me: "Here you bring scraps of Scripture, but we have Scripture as well as you, viz: 'If we have sown unto you spiritual things, should not we reap of your temporal or carnal things.' 'And the Lord hath ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel,' &c."

Answer: "Reaping temporal things, or living of the Gospel, is not limited to tithes."

Here being interrupted and prevented from further discourse against tithes, the bishop asked us: "Have you any exceptions to offer in writing?"

I answered: "Yes, we have:" which we then delivered to the clerk, John Relph, Esq. to read; which he did very distinctly, and no reply was given; but the bishop directed him to lay them by for further consideration. But we heard of no further consideration or debate about the said bill in the house of lords, but that it was wholly laid aside.

The temporal lords that were present in the said committee were very civil to us; and after that discourse, divers of them appeared more kind to us than ever before.

I was very glad and esteemed it a great mercy from the Lord to us, that the said bill was stopped; for if it had passed into a law, I was

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persuaded that the priests of the persecuting sort, would have taken such strength and encouragement thereby, that they would have persecuted and imprisoned a great part of our Friends throughout England, &c.

Blessed be the Lord, they were disappointed, that that weapon was not formed ready to be put into their hands or power to make use of.

By the poll act which was passed in the previous reign, every dissenting teacher or preacher was obliged to pay a tax of twenty shillings quarterly; and as those were not exempted from payment who received no remuneration for preaching, the tax fell of course upon the ministers of Friends, and distraints it appears were made in several instances to recover it. When this act on its expiration in 1695 was about to be renewed, George Whitehead and Thomas Lower applied to several influential members of parliament, and succeeded in convincing them that it was inconsistent with the tenor of the act, that persons who had no gain from preaching should pay a tax of four pounds a year; and a clause was accordingly introduced into the new bill, which effectually relieved the case of Friends.

In the year 1697–8, the *Czar of Muscovy* being in England, it was agreed that some

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Friends should wait upon him; and George Whitehead prepared an address which contains bold but salutary counsel, shortly stating the character of the Society, and concluding with the following exhortation, to rule with mercy and to give liberty of conscience to his subjects.

"O Czar! the Great God requireth of thee to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before Him, who is a God of knowledge, and by whom actions are weighed, and who is the Righteous Judge of all.

"We pray thee observe the good resolution of that great king Artaxerxes, when he was made lord over many nations; he would not exalt himself by reason of his power, but purposed with equity always and gentleness to govern his subjects, and wholly to set them into a peaceable life, and thereby to bring his kingdom into tranquillity, &c.

"And know, that it is by mercy and truth that the thrones of kings are established; and that thereby thou mayst obtain mercy and favour with the Most High God, and gain the real love and affections of thy subjects. O! be tender and merciful to them all, as they are all thy fellow creatures created by one God: O! break off thy sins by righteousness, and showing mercy to the poor.

"And let the example of our renowned king

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William, influence thee to the like moderation and clemency, throughout all thy dominions; which he hath showed in granting free liberty of conscience, in the peaceable exercise of religion and worship towards Almighty God, as they may be persuaded by Him who is the Sovereign Lord over the consciences of men.

"From thy real well wishers and friends to thy immortal soul, who desire thy everlasting happiness."

The paper was signed by five Friends, and among the rest by William Penn; and it appears that they waited upon the Czar at Deptford, where he resided; but he declined to see them on the professed ground of being unwell. However one of the principal persons in his suite, who treated the deputation in a friendly manner, promised to deliver the paper to his master.

The days of severe persecution had now drawn to a close, and there can be no doubt that a great improvement had taken place in the general feeling of all parties in regard to mutual toleration. The race of blind zealots was not however extinct. "There were some priests," says the narrative, "in the county of Norfolk, who appeared very invidious against us and our liberty of religious exercise, being

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instigated by our old apostate adversary, Francis Bugg; and having what assistance he could afford them, they must needs have a public meeting with some of our Friends at West-Deerham, in their parish church, so called, where some of our Friends of London and of the country met them, at the time appointed; and though the priests had gotten many of our Friends' books together, and endeavoured to render them obnoxious, yet they gained no advantage but were disappointed of their evil designs; which were for some pretence to incense the people and the government to raise a new persecution against us, as hereafter is made more obvious. I had intended to have gone that journey into Norfolk, to have met them; but was in the interim prevented by a sudden indisposition, which remained for some days, till the Lord was pleased to recover me.

"However, the said Norfolk priests, in pursuit of their invidious designs and attempts, published two calumnious books, entitled

"I. 'A Brief Discovery,' &c.

"II. 'Some few of the Quakers' many horrid Blasphemies,' &c.; which they delivered to the parliament. The priests chiefly concerned against us in the said books, that they might appear men of note and learning, gave their

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names and distinctions in the title page of their said "Brief Discovery."

"These priests thought to do great matters against us, by most falsely and maliciously rendering our principles blasphemous and seditious, &c.; wherein they were sufficiently detected and refuted, in two books which I wrote, in direct and full answer to them and their most bitter and unjust charges against us and our principles.

"One of my answers to them is entitled, 'Truth and Innocency vindicated, and the People called Quakers defended in Principle and Practice, against invidious attempts and calumnies, &c.' printed 1699, and delivered to members of parliament.

"The other answer I put forth, is entitled 'Truth prevalent, and the Quakers discharged from the Norfolk rectors' furious charge, &c.' which though it be large, several of them were delivered to members of parliament. *

"Yet the implacable enmity of the said priests, and their assisting agent F. Bugg, and

* This work consists of one hundred and eighty-seven closely printed small 4to. pages. It forms an epitome of the charges against the Quakers, and an able defence of their civil and religious principles.

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others, was such, that their persecuting us with gross aspersions and calumnies in print, would not appease their wrath; but they got an invidious petition framed against us, which they intended to present to the house of commons; in order to which, the two knights of the shire were intrusted to move the said petition in the house. Two priests attending and soliciting for some time, to have their petition moved and promoted in the house, but were disappointed therein, and their persecuting purposes justly frustrated.

"For having obtained a copy of their petition, I showed it to divers leading members of parliament; and how greatly the design thereof tended to raise a new persecution, and to make void the toleration and liberty of conscience, granted and legally settled by the government. They were made sensible thereof; and resolved to oppose the said petition, and to throw it out with contempt, if it came to be moved in the house; asking me: "In whose hands it was?" I told them: "In the hands of the two Norfolk knights;" with whom I divers times discoursed about it, to show them the nature and tendency of the petition, and how greatly we were misrepresented in it. They understanding that many eminent members in the house were set against it, were in a strait, and intimated thus

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much to me, "that the clergy and some of the gentry of their own county of Norfolk, were earnest with them to present the said petition; but perceiving it would be rejected and thrown out, it brought them under that strait, that they must either displease those of their own county who chose them, or the house of commons." I told them: "It was an unthankful office that was put upon them:" they confessed it was. However I said: "We did not solicit them to prevent their presenting or moving the said petition in the house; but if they were disposed to present it, we desired that justice of them, to give us some previous notice of the time when they intended to move it, that we might attend in readiness to answer for ourselves." This was fairly granted by them; however, upon their deliberate consideration, the petition was prudently dropt."

A similar attempt was made by the corporation of Bury in Suffolk, but their representatives in parliament wisely declined presenting the petition of their constituents to the house.

This petition with the light of a hundred years' experience upon its *jealousies*, sets the folly of the persecuting spirit in so striking and almost ludicrous a point of view, that I shall pay it the respect of insertion in this place.

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"To the Honourable the Commons of England, in parliament assembled.

"The humble petition of the aldermen, assistant justice, and chief burgess, and burgesses of the common council, in behalf of themselves and the other inhabitants of the borough of Bury St. Edmonds, in Suffolk.

"Humbly showeth,

"That we considering all ancient heresies which have vexed both Church and state, were never so formidable in their rise and progress as are the Quakers; we have too just a cause of dreading the subversion of our government by them if not carefully prevented and suppressed, being in their clandestine constitutions opposite to the condition of our established policy, and in their principles of faith antichristian; of government, antimonarchial; in points of doctrine, antiscriptural; and in practices illegal; having their weekly, monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings, which we cannot but reasonably believe, tend not only to the subversion of our laws but of our religion also, to us of greater concern than our lives.

"We therefore, obliged in duty to God and our country, do humbly pray your timely consideration of our *jealousies, and to remove our fears if not by totally suppressing, yet at least by preventing their after growth and encrease amongst us*; that our posterity may untroubled live, by this early care of our laws and liberties, and we enjoy the wished for happiness of a peaceful life."

At this period George Whitehead brings his memoirs to a close, and with the triumph of a Christian veteran, thus reviews the engagements of his past life.

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CONCLUSION.

Manifold exercises, trials, and tribulations, hath the Lord my God supported me under and carried me through, in my pilgrimage for his Name and Truth's sake, more than could possibly be related in this history; having spent a long time, even the greatest part of my life from my youth upward, in the testimony, service, and vindication of the living, unchangeable Truth, as it is in Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered many things, both in body and spirit, as also by reproaches and calumnies, and sincerely laboured in his love, who has supported me, and hitherto helped me in the Gospel of the Grace of God, and of his dear Son Jesus Christ, even the Gospel of life, salvation, and peace, to them who truly believe. And yet I esteem not all my sufferings and afflictions worthy to be compared to the glory set before me; for all which I must ascribe blessing, honour, glory, power, and dominion to the Lord God and the Lamb upon his throne, for ever and ever!

And when by the grace and assistance of my Heavenly Father, I have finished the work He

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hath given me to do; I firmly believe and livingly hope in the Lord, I shall die in the Lord Jesus Christ, and ever live with and rest in Him in his heavenly kingdom.

O my soul! enter thou into thy rest, even thy eternal rest from thy manifold labours, travails, and sufferings; for the Lord thy God hath dealt bountifully with thee: glory to his excellent Name for evermore!

G. W.

Concluded, London, the 18th of the 6th month, 1711.

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SECTION XIX.

Brief notice of George Whitehead's further services.*

When George Whitehead wrote the preceding conclusion to the account of his "Christian Progress," it is highly probable that he found his bodily strength diminished; and that he anticipated a speedy dismissal from works to rewards. It is not easy to imagine a state of human existence more desirable than that in which this Christian labourer appears to have been at the date of the preceding paragraph. In his seventy-fifth year, looking with peaceful retrospect on a life conscientiously devoted to what he believed to be the will of his Creator, and the service of his fellow creatures; and forward with humble but certain hope to that

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* To the original work of George Whitehead a Supplement was appended by the Editor, from which I have taken most of the particulars mentioned in this notice of the last twelve years of his life.

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glory, in comparison of which all the sufferings he had endured for Christ's sake were not worthy to be named. He was destined, however, to remain for twelve years more in this state of being, and was enabled to employ even the last remains of his bodily strength, in his accustomed religious and civil services. Many of those who had been his contemporaries in the early labours of the Society had been removed from their labours; and there were no doubt many occasions occurring, in which the advice and counsel of so experienced a veteran as George Whitehead, would be of essential service to the cause he was so anxious to promote; and the subject of liberty of conscience appears to have continued deeply to interest him.

George Whitehead has not noticed in his memoirs the death of king William, or the accession of queen Anne. The former circumstance could not but be one of the most mournful kind, to all the enemies of religious persecution; and to none more than to the Quakers. It is quite evident from the circumstances just mentioned, that in his liberal and enlightened views, he far outrun the age in which he lived and the people over whom he ruled. William and Mary may be said to have planted the tree

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of religious liberty in England: in their reign was the first act of parliament made "*for the ease of scrupulous consciences*;" and the debt of gratitude due to William, as the instrument under Divine Providence of the ease which they enjoyed, was, there is good reason to believe, *deeply felt* by the Society of Friends.

On his safe return from Holland in the year 1701, and on the settlement of the crown of England in the protestant line, the Society thought it right to address him with their grateful acknowledgments and congratulations. Well might they say: "We thy dutiful subjects sincerely express our joy for thy safe return to thy people. We have great cause to love, honour, and pray for thee, as a prince whom we believe God hath promoted and principled for the good ends of government; under whose reign we enjoy great mercies and favours, and particularly that of liberty to tender consciences in religious worship." Nor would it be with less sincerity, that in the following year, 1702, on presenting an address to the queen on her accession to the throne, they said: "We cannot but be sorrowfully affected with a deep sense of the loss sustained by the death of our late king William the III. whom God made the instrument of much good to these nations; a prince who in-

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deed desired to be the common father of his people, and, as such, did by his great example as well as precept, endeavour to unite them in interest and affection, and promoted and confirmed a legal liberty to tender consciences; by all which, his reign was adorned to the renown of his memory."

George Whitehead, in company with some other Friends, appears to have presented both these addresses.

I do not find any record of his proceedings during the few years of queen Anne's reign, which followed the close of his own narrative, except in a work published in conjunction with William Mead in the year 1712, under the title of "The people called Quakers truly represented, and vindicated from some mistakes in the representation of the Lower House of Convocation;" to which was added, a reply to a persecuting pamphlet against the Quakers and the toleration. This work will be found in the Appendix. It is evident from it that the spirit of persecution was far from extinguished. A bigotted zeal for the hierarchy, and a corresponding aversion to all dissenters, manifested itself in various ways, and especially in the law *against occasional conformity*, and that *against the growth of schism*. The latter act was de-

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signed to prevent dissenters from keeping schools, and virtually to take out of the parents' hands their natural right in the care and education of their own children. The Society of Friends presented a strong but respectful remonstrance against it, and it met with great opposition in both houses of parliament. It was nevertheless carried and received the royal assent, but on the very day on which this act was to have become the law of England, Anne, the last of the Stuart dynasty, expired. A change of measures immediately took place under the mild reign of George I.; and on his accession to the throne in the year 1714, George Whitehead presented to him, in company with a number of other Friends, a congratulatory address; which having been read, he addressed the king to the following effect.

"Thou art welcome to us, king George. We heartily wish thee health and happiness, and thy son the prince also. King William the Third was an happy instrument in putting a stop to persecution, by promoting toleration; which being intended for uniting the king's protestant subjects in interest and affection, it hath so far that effect as to make them more kind to one another, even among the different persuasions, than they were when persecution

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was on foot. We desire the king may have farther knowledge of us and our innocency; and that to live a peaceable and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty, is according to our principle and practice."

Having a desire to see the prince of Wales, and intimating it to a nobleman who was gentleman to the prince's bed chamber, he was introduced with several of his friends into a chamber where the prince met them; and George Whitehead addressed him as follows:

"We take it as a favour that we are thus admitted to see the prince of Wales, and are truly very glad to see thee. Having delivered our address to the king thy royal father, and being desirous to give thyself a visit in true love, we very heartily wish health and happiness to you both; and that if it should please God thou shouldst survive thy father and come to the throne, thou mayst enjoy tranquillity and peace, &c.

"I am persuaded, that if the king thy father and thyself do stand for toleration, for liberty of conscience to be kept inviolable, God will stand by you.

"May king Solomon's choice of wisdom be thy choice, with holy Job's integrity and compassion to the oppressed; and the state of the

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righteous ruler commended by king David, viz. 'He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God; and he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.'"

It is said that the good old man's address was well received by the prince.

In the year 1715, on occasion of the rebellion, George Whitehead and one of his friends obtained admission to the king, and presented to him a paper; a copy of which was found among his manuscripts after his decease.

"A few words in true love to king George, humbly presented.

"Seeing our most gracious God hath been pleased, by his overruling power and providence, to give thee a free and peaceable accession to the throne of these kingdoms; O let thy trust and confidence be in the same Divine Power, and thy eye to that Light and Grace thereby given thee, and the Lord will no doubt confound thy foes, and disperse and expel that dark cloud and spirit of rebellion that is risen up against thee and thy lawful government, constituted for the defence and support of our just liberties and properties, religious and civil, against popery and slavery.

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"Thy Christian principle for liberty to tender consciences being maintained and stood by, against persecution, the pillar of popery, the Lord will stand by and defend thee and thy royal offspring; for surely, 'mercy and truth do preserve the king, and his throne is upholden by mercy.' Remember what the Spirit of the Lord spake by king David in his last words: 'He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God; and he shall be as the light of the morning, even a morning without clouds,' &c.

"The Lord the God of hosts be thy defence, thy Guide, and Counsellor, and replenish thy heart with his wisdom, whereby kings reign and princes decree justice; for in that wisdom true dominion stands.

"That thou, O king, mayst be a blessing in the hand of the Lord to these nations, and enjoy a safe, a peaceable, and prosperous reign in this life, and a crown of righteousness in that to come, is the hearty prayer of an ancient servant of Jesus Christ, and

"A truly loving and faithful subject,

"GEORGE WHITEHEAD."

"London, the 25th of the 8th month, called October, 1715."

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In the following year, at the age of eighty, he again waited on the king with a deputation from the Society, to present to him a congratulatory address on the suppression of the rebellion. He introduced the address to the king, by a speech which proved that he still preserved his faculties and his loyalty. It was to the following effect.

"That in their annual assembly, held for the religious concerns of their Society, endeavouring to promote and put in practice the duties of religion professed by them, the sense of the great deliverance had such a weight upon their minds, that they were willing to express it in an address to king George, whom God by his providence had brought hither and preserved, so that he could well say, he was George by the grace of God, king of Great Britain, &c. And that as men carried that saying stamped on the money in their pockets, so it was to be wished it might be imprinted in the hearts of the subjects."

Though George Whitehead had now become very feeble in body, yet he continued to attend the meetings of his friends both for religious worship and for discipline; bearing his testimony "to the virtue and excellency of that Divine Grace, which had supported him from his youth upward; imparting in most sensible expressions

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such choice fruits of his own experiences, that an attentive hearer could not depart unedified. And even in meetings about Church affairs, where sometimes diversity of sentiments may arise, he would express his thoughts with a convincing force and solidity of reasoning, no less admirable than the unspotted integrity of his grey hairs was honourable."

When in his eighty-sixth year he wrote a lively address to his friends, which was printed and circulated amongst them. He died in great peace in the year 1722–3, at the age of eighty-seven. *

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* For the account of his close, see "Introduction," *p.* xxxvi. of vol. I.

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APPENDIX.

I. A CHRISTIAN EPISTLE TO FRIENDS IN GENERAL.

II. THE PEOPLE CALLED QUAKERS TRULY REPRESENTED, AND VINDICATED FROM SOME MISTAKES IN THE LOWER HOUSE OF CONVOCATION, &c. &c.

III. THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE AND SOCIETY OF THE PEOPLE CALLED QUAKERS, &c. &c.

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APPENDIX.

A Christian Epistle to Friends in General.

Dated 28th of 7th mo. 1689.

Dear and tenderly beloved Friends and called of God, every where;

In a real and deep sense of my Heavenly Father's love and tender mercy, revealed through his most dear Son, our ever blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which I am, with many more, livingly made a partaker of, doth my life and spirit very dearly and tenderly salute you, as truly and most heartily wishing and praying, that Divine Grace, mercy, and peace, with all spiritual blessings and Divine favours in Christ Jesus may be encreased and multiplied among you and unto you, to your great consolation, peace, and prosperity in the love of God.

Dear Friends, finding for some time of late a living and holy constraint and pressure of spirit, to communicate some things of weight and concern unto you respecting your safety, peace, and prosperity in the blessed unchange-

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able Truth, I am opened and encouraged by the precious Life and Spirit of our God, to be clear and free therein towards you all, and that in discharge of my tender conscience, in the sight and presence of the God of my life, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his dear Son, as I have sincerely done from my youth upward: blessed be his pure Name for ever!

And having had these many years' experience in the weighty service of the Lord our God, through manifold exercises, burdens, spiritual travails, and oppositions, I may not hide my talent, nor conceal those things my Lord and Master requires me to divulge for the safety and good of his people, in their several conditions, states, and attainments, as having long and truly seen the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, and the good and blessed estate of his chosen and faithful ones; for which I praise the Name of the Lord my Redeemer, in whom I have believed through his Divine goodness, never to be forgotten by any of us; as also being not ignorant of or unacquainted with the many wiles, various workings, and depths of satan, the great adversary of man's felicity and of the peace of God's people, who worketh upon the divers inclinations, mutable affections, wills, weaknesses, and infirmities of the sons of men, to deceive, pervert, deprave, and corrupt

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them, that they may the more easily be led captive by him at his will, in their following their own unsubjected wills and spirits.

You therefore, my dear Friends, who have livingly felt and tasted of the Lord's power and goodness, and known his work in your hearts, in order to your deliverance and redemption out of the evil world and the corruptions thereof, prize his tender mercies and goodness, and forget them not. Let the holy fear of the Lord God be your treasure, and true wisdom and understanding the stability of your times in righteousness. Let your sincere love to the pure Name and Truth of the Lord, and one unto another, be continued in that unchangeable truth and power of an Endless Life, whereunto the Lord hath called us; and I pray God increase your love and zeal for his glorious Name, and Christian tenderness, and brotherly affection one towards another, that life for ever more may be your blessing and portion; as it will be to all them who dwell in amity, true love, and unity of spirit in our Lord Jesus Christ, which is a most joyful, comfortable, and blessed state; which too many professors of Truth are short of for want of keeping near to the Lord, in his holy fear, and love of his blessed Name and Truth; whose negligence and unfaithfulness to Truth in themselves, hath caused

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a decay of love and want of charity towards others; and then, instead of humbly waiting and depending upon the Lord, some have exalted themselves in a self-will, self-conceit, and affection to preeminence in judgment over others, until thereby divisions and self-separations have been caused and stirred up by them, to the great grief of the spirits of the upright, who have kept their integrity to the Lord, his Truth, and people. And this self-exaltation, slighting, and contemning others, have been and are the great evils, snares, and engines wherewith the adversary catches them that never were thoroughly subjected into true humility, mortification, true self-denial or dying with Christ. Such, though under profession of Truth, may make a great show and flourish for a time in outward appearance, leaves, and blossoms, yet they bring not forth fruit unto perfection or ripeness in Christ. Therefore beware of self-exaltation, beware of an earthly spirit entering, beware of covetousness which is idolatry; let not the earth interpose betwixt any of your souls, and the brightness of that Divine Glory which has appeared even in our day and times.

Spiritual gifts may be lost or fallen short of, if the Fountain of them, the Holy Spirit of Life itself, be not diligently minded and followed; and where love towards God and his Truth

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decays in any, their love towards his servants and people grows cold; and then their gifts decrease and die, as the Life of them is withdrawn or departed from, or that love lost which is the more excellent way: "For if I want charity [or love] I am nothing." What gifts, openings, discoveries, visions, revelations, wisdom, knowledge, or understanding soever any have, yet still it is the Heavenly Root must bear them, they must keep low their minds and spirits to that from whence life and love springs; or else they fall, wither, die, and become empty, uncharitable, and hard-hearted; and there the enemy has his evil ends upon them, in betraying them and corrupting their minds from the Truth, from life, from love, from the innocency and simplicity which is in Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and there is a danger in being too early and forward to censure and judge others, and in judging, censuring, and undervaluing others' gifts, ministry, and labours, whom God hath called into his work and service; for some thereby may either lose their own gifts, life, and strength, or fall short of those heavenly gifts which otherwise they might attain to, if they kept low and tender in humility, love, and society with their brethren; whereby they might also be serviceable with them. For I have seen in my time some who

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never passed through judgment in themselves, yet very censorious, judging, detracting, and whispering against their brethren, slighting them, their ministry, and labours, who themselves have greatly lost by it; and God in displeasure hath suffered them to discover their own weakness and nakedness, for their own abasement under the righteous judgment of Truth. And it is evident that from this kind of exalted, censorious, whispering, and envious spirit, which worketh not for love and union, have proceeded the several divisions, schisms, and separations which have happened, to the great trouble of the Church of Christ in our days, as in the primitive Christians' days.

And the several sorts of apostates and backsliders from Truth, show what and what kind and manner of spirit they went and go out in, by their works and fruits, whether in a spirit of pride and ambition, in a spirit of envy and hypocrisy, in a scornful contemning spirit, in a covetous earthly spirit, in a loose profane spirit, or in a drunken debauched spirit of ranterism and fleshly liberty, which come all from one evil root and seed, according to the various corrupt inclinations and wills of men, upon which the enemy works, and appears with baits and temptations suitable thereunto, that he may prevail the more. And it is certain, that the

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envious apostates and wilful adversaries, were the most troublesome to the primitive Churches of Christ and his holy apostles in their day, and so in ours. Therefore blessed and truly happy are they that keep their habitations in the Truth and love of God, and live in Christian love and Charity one towards another; for such walk in the light, where there is no occasion of stumbling or scandal.

And as it was evidence unto the primitive Christians, that they were passed from death to life because they loved the brethren, and that they had purified their souls through their obedience of the Holy Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren; even so now the same evidence and testimony remains and lives in and for all them that dwell in the love of God one towards another: for all envy, prejudice, back bitings, whisperings, tale carrying, lying, heats, passions, provocations, reviling, railing, clamours, scorn, contempt, ill language, flattery, and hypocrisy are to be utterly put away, avoided, judged, condemned, and for ever excluded the camp of God; for they proceed from the false and degenerate birth, evil seed and spirit, and not from the true seed or birth; which is innocent and hurts no body by word or action, in person, name, reputation, or property; for that is tender in all these things.

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For false reports, whisperings, back bitings, and tale carrying cause strife and division, and are condemned by the law of God and Light of Christ, and expressly forbidden by God Himself: "Thou shalt not be as one that carries tales up and down among my people: thou shalt not receive a false tale, nor raise a false report against the Lord's people, nor do his prophets or servants any harm."

And all who profess the Truth, or make mention of the Name of the Lord among us, ought to watch over their own spirits, wills, and passions, and have a care of hurting one another, or crushing any tender spirit or plant, or stopping or quenching any spiritual gift or testimony God has given, how little or low soever it may be or seem; for some of a tender spirit are sooner hurt and wounded than healed. All keep in Christian humility, meekness, patience, gentleness, and tender heartedness one towards another. And elders and overseers in the Churches of Christ must be examples of believers, both in humility, meekness, patience, and condescension, as Christian patterns; and not self-willed, nor soon angry, nor given to passion, striving, heats, or contention. Such Christian example and behaviour in the house and Church of the living God, tend greatly to keep out and prevent contentions and contem-

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tious spirits, and to the comfort and encouragement of the upright hearted, who are willing to serve the Lord, his Truth, and people.

My dear Friends! the Lord our God has been good to us; a tender Father through all our trials, sufferings, and exercises, in upholding us by his free Spirit, accompanying us with his Presence, comforting us in our afflictions with his renewed mercies and multiplied favours, in preserving us a living people to his praise until this day, and affording us this present liberty we have of late enjoyed, and do partake of the benefit and advantage thereof, in our public, peaceable and religious assemblies for the exaltation of the glorious Name, holy Truth, and Divine power of the Lord our God. Wherefore we have great cause to prize his tender mercies and goodness to us, and walk humbly under the sense thereof, that a right use and improvement may be made of all the mercies and privileges we do enjoy, and such a good use of the present liberty, as that none grow careless or negligent, indifferent or lukewarm, because thereof, nor any sit down at ease in the flesh or in the earth, and therein promise themselves security from further sufferings or trials, because of the late and present enjoyment of liberty and ease from persecution. This is no good use of the present mercy, nor

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safe conclusion; for God has many ways to try his people; and national calamities and distresses, whereof his own people sometimes partake, are not at an end, nor the judgments incurred by iniquity turned away, because of the continued provocations, wickedness, rebellions against God, their abominations, pride, hypocrisies, deceits, falsehood, and presumption, abounding in this and other professing nations against the great and righteous God, the Judge of all, who is so long sparing and forbearing as He is to this nation, merely for his small remnant and seed's sake, which is already gathered and to be gathered.

Yet the great God will distress nations, and cause the earth to tremble before Him, and overturnings and desolations in the earth before calamities are ended, or Christ's peaceable kingdom be set up more generally in the earth, or where as yet it is opposed and resisted; for the cause why wars, desolations, and the devouring sword are already in great judgment entered so many nations and countries, is because of the crying sins, great provocations, persecutions, and cruelties in the dark places of the earth.

And, dear Friends, brethren, and sisters, whom I truly love in the Lord, who retain your integrity and love in the blessed, unchangeable

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Truth, you cannot be insensible how that the Lord's harvest is great, and what need of faithful labourers there now is; an effectual door being open in this time of liberty, the Lord in mercy has granted for the good of many poor souls, that they may come and receive the Truth in the love of it; and that they who have been or are of a fearful heart, may receive strength and know the Lord to be their Saviour and Redeemer, in this his evangelical day, and free and blessed opportunity He has afforded. And yet, though this harvest be great, the diligent and faithful labourers are but few now raised up, in comparison of the greatness of the harvest and necessity of the work; many of our ancient brethren and faithful fellow labourers and helpers in Christ being taken away, and gone to their everlasting rest, having faithfully served out their day and generation, fulfilled and finished their testimony with joy and peace, and obtained a crown of glory that shall never fade away.

And this very matter has been often seriously upon my thoughts and weighty considerations, what should be the cause or reason why so few faithful labourers and clear Gospel ministers, have been of late raised up or are now brought forth; though some have a good lively testimony, blessed be the Lord! And it clearly

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appears to me, first, that few are given up in their spirits for this weighty service, as we were in the beginning, who are in some measure gifted and qualified.

Secondly, few sincerely seek the Lord, or have waited upon Him with fervent desires, prayer, and supplication, that they may be gifted, indued, and qualified with power, wisdom, faith, patience, &c. for the work of the ministry of Christ Jesus; whereas, if any man want wisdom he should ask it of God; and he shall not miss of a gracious answer to the desire of his soul, who sincerely asks, seeks, and knocks at Wisdom's gate: "Whatsoever ye ask in my Name," saith Christ, "believe that ye shall receive it, and it shall be given you." You know Solomon's request to the Lord for an understanding heart to discern judgment, his choice of wisdom rather than riches or long life, how it pleased God. 1 *Kings* iii. 10.

Thirdly, very few have their minds and spirits really and inwardly exercised in frequent prayer and daily supplication to God, or in heavenly meditation, or spiritual contemplation in God's pure and spiritual laws, ways, judgments, and works, or in Holy Scriptures by the Holy Spirit which opens them; but too many have their minds, hearts, and affections taken up with these fading objects and things be-

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low, minding earthly things, being overcharged with the love of riches, cares, and cumbers of this life to compass the earth, wherein many a good talent has been hid and poor soul buried in captivity. Whereas it requires an inward and serious exercise of spirit toward God, frequent and fervent prayer and supplication unto Him, an inward and diligent attention upon Him, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, to obtain both Divine wisdom and a weighty, living, clear, evangelical ministry. For the sanctified hearts and souls who truly fear God, are those into whom only wisdom entereth, and maketh them friends of God, and prophets. The Lord will have an inward, spiritual, sincere, and zealous people. Oh! inward watchfulness, prayer, and supplication to Almighty God have been and are too much neglected by many; I pray God they may seriously examine, and find out the causes in themselves with the Light of Christ Jesus, and bring all to the righteous judgment thereof.

Fourthly, if any of the younger sort, who are in some measure imbued with spiritual gifts and knowledge, do let up a slight and disesteem in their minds of their elder brethren, who are experienced in the work and service of God, and keep not in society or union with them in the spirit of love and of a sound mind, but give

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way unto a singularity, abounding in their own sense, not keeping low and humble before the Lord nor little in their own eyes; such neither grow in life, nor in Divine openings, nor increase in their gifts, nor come to attain to a weighty, clear, evangelical ministry and service; but rather lose, die, and wither, unless they come into true humility, self-denial, reconciliation, love, and union with their elder faithful brethren; who, in the love of God, would tenderly help them, and not hinder them in the work and service of the Lord our God.

It is both a great grief and scandal also, to see many of the younger sort who frequent our meetings, and even of Friends' children also, degenerating into pride, and height of spirit and apparel, so nearly to imitate and border upon the world as too many do, contrary to the gravity, modesty, sobriety, plainness, simplicity, innocency, and humility, which Truth requires in example as well as in spirit, and which Truth at first led many into; and as still it doth lead and order them that truly love and obey it: in which I pray God to settle and order his people, and that no plea nor excuse may be made to maintain pride, vanity, or immodesty in apparel, which only gratifies vain airy minds and spirits, and the lust of the carnal eye, and grieves the tender, and gives occasion

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of reproach and stumbling to them that are without, and to such as are soberly and religiously inclined. O! it is precious to keep low and humble before the Lord, and to walk as living examples of Christian humility; a lowly mind is content with low things, and loves plainness.

And this is observable, that if never so much be truly and sincerely preached in public against pride and vanity in apparel, &c. if it be indulged or connived at at home in children or young persons, by parents, guardians, or overseers, all preaching, instruction, and warning proves to them but as water spilt upon the ground and makes no impression; whilst through such encouragement and indulgence at home, they embrace a spirit of pride and irreverence towards God, and disregard to his truth and people; and though some formality and something of the form of Truth, they may have by outward education, it is not by the work of regeneration; for there are but few in comparison that really come in at that door; and therefore I have had often a godly fear upon me of the springing up of degenerate plants amongst us, and a degenerate generation to the dishonour of Truth and our holy profession, after our days.

And it is they who are inclining and getting into the spirit of the world, and liberty out of

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the Truth, who live not in humility nor in the fear of God, that give secret strength to an apostate turbulent spirit, which has been the Church's exercise of late years, and that are most easily catched with that apostate spirit, and feigned words of the instruments thereof, whose work is to sow discord, and make divisions, schisms, and separations, which are fruits of the flesh; for if all had been faithful to the Light, and kept in humility and love of Truth and one another, there had been no enmity one towards another, nor smiting of fellow servants; but the fear of God would have preserved them out of those snares of death, which that spirit of discord leads into.

Howbeit, I am well satisfied in the Lord, that He will never suffer a general or final apostacy or degeneration; the brightness of our day, and glory of our Sun of Righteousness shall never be extinguished; although too many, through the adversary's subtilty and temptations, together with their own carnal and corrupt inclinations, are apt to degenerate, and their minds to be exalted and alienated from the fear of God, from the cross of Christ, from humility and lowliness of mind, from true and conscientious tenderness, from love to the brethren, from innocency, plainness, and simplicity that is in Christ, both in their spirits, language, and

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habits, who therefore ought to be faithfully admonished and tenderly instructed; by which means, together with a meek and gentle behaviour, many have been gained and many may yet be recovered out of the snares of satan, who have been taken captive at unawares; "having compassion of some, making a difference," has often reached the tender part in them: and in relation to others more deeply prejudiced, I remember a cautious saying of an ancient and faithful brother deceased, viz. "Where we cannot make them better, we must take heed we do not make them worse." The Lord keep his people in his holy fear, watchful and humble before Him, in true love and tender heartedness; that they may receive wisdom from Him to behave themselves, and to minister suitably to all conditions.

And all dear and tenderly beloved Friends, with all who are effectually convinced of God's holy Truth and Name, and do profess the same; in the holy fear of God, in his Light watch and pray constantly, without fainting, against your soul's subtil adversary, in all his attempts to beget into self-exaltation and prejudice, to smite fellow servants and cause divisions or offences; for that is the enemy's work.

And, Friends, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons; this was

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ancient and Christian counsel. So let not the rich and high contemn the low and mean; let not uncertain riches puff up any, or exalt them above their brethren; nor any brother of high degree in earthly enjoyments, slight or contemn their brethren of low degree. Some sincere hearted and serviceable Friends and brethren have enjoyed plenty of the world's goods, and yet through losses, sufferings, disappointments, or others' unjust dealings by them, are brought low in the world; and who were esteemed when in prosperity. It would be very unchristian and sinful to slight or disesteem them in their adversity, which is their trial. The poor of this world who are rich in faith, whom God hath chosen, are near unto Him; their faith is the more tried by their poverty and lowness, and how soon that may be the trial of many that are rich they know not; therefore it is very unsafe for any to trust in uncertain riches, or to be exalted or lifted up because of them; they should rather humbly depend upon the living God, and trust in Him, and love and esteem their brethren in Truth, how mean and low soever in this world, knowing that with God there is no respect of persons, nor with them who truly bear his Image.

And pray, Friends, keep out all disputes and controversies, which some busy spirits in the

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world are incident unto, as about outward revolutions, governments, state affairs, and kingdoms of this world. Let not their divisions divide you, nor their strife and contentions about the outward court and forms of religion, earthly kingdoms and crowns that will fade, influence any among you to contend or become parties about them; but quietly serve and wait upon God in your places and stations where He hath set you, and submissively leave all to his overruling power, wisdom, and providence, to do or suffer things to come to pass as He pleaseth; for none may say to Him: "What dost Thou?" though men may be warned as God shall require. And He knows what is best for his people, and will cause all things to work together for good to them that love Him: his kingdom come more and more, his blessed will be done in heaven and earth, who is Judge of all and sees all hearts, intents, and designs of men throughout the whole world. And you know that as we cannot make flesh our arm, nor therewith fight for one or another, stillness and quietness, innocency and good-will towards all men according to our Christian principle, is therefore the best and safest state and condition, wherein we all may approve ourselves as the Lord's hidden ones and as of them that are quiet in the land.

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Be still and know that the Lord is God, and that He will be exalted in his everlasting kingdom and dominion over all the kingdoms of men; neither let the world's confusions confound you, nor the world's distractions distract you or any of you, nor the removing of mountains in the earth remove you from the Lord's mountain, nor the unstable waters or tossing waves toss you, or influence any of you to discompose or hurry you from your peaceable habitations; but keep in your Strong Hold, your Rock, and Foundation, Christ Jesus; nor let any thing divert you from minding his kingdom of peace above all, which is not of this world; out of which men's lusts and the ground and occasion of wars and fighting are excluded; for in Salem is his tabernacle.

O! let all quietly wait upon the all-seeing, righteous, holy God, in order to see his good end through all, and his righteous determination and decision of the controversies amongst men. And keep in innocency and peaceable conversation towards all, and inoffensively under and towards the civil government, giving no real occasion of offence; but as becomes true Christians, walk in love and good will towards all, both high and low; for herein hath been and will be our safety and confidence through all our trials, being preserved by the power and

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goodness of the Lord our God, as his peculiar people, who is our Stay, our Rock, and Refuge: blessed be his Name for ever! O! forget not to praise the Lord, for all his tender mercies and peculiar favours and goodness in our preservation until this day; knowing also, that they who sincerely and steadfastly trust in his Name and power, shall be as mount Sion that shall never be removed; and that as his servant David declared: "It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man: it is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes," *Ps.* cxviii. 8, 9; I pray God keep all his people in a steady dependance upon Him, and confidence in Him to the end.

Finally, my tenderly beloved Friends and brethren, having thus far cleared my conscience in the sight of God, in the living sense of his Presence and counsel in these matters, as relating to several states and dangers, I recommend all to the faithful and true Witness in themselves, to make the particular and just application, and to make every one sensible of the weight and lively impressions of these and all other Christian cautions and warnings, proceeding from thence through any of the servants of Christ, for the safety and peace of all the Lord's people among us; even to the least and lowest of his flock, and those convinced among us,

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who are called by his Grace to the confession of his holy Name and Truth.

The God of peace be with you all and bless you, and encrease righteousness, peace, love, and union among his people every where, that all may be steadfast in the Truth, true and faithful in their day and time to the end of their days: amen, amen.

Your faithful friend and brother in Christ,

GEORGE WHITEHEAD.

London, the 28th of the 7th mo. 1689.

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THE

People called Quakers

TRULY REPRESENTED,

*And Vindicated from some Mistakes, wherein they are misrepresented in the Representation of the Lower House of Convocation.**

Printed in the year 1712.

Part I.

Seeing it is not unknown that we, the said people, profess faith in God the Father, and in his dear eternal Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, One God blessed for ever more;

* Perhaps the following note may be acceptable to some readers.

The Convocation of the English clergy, at least that of the province of Canterbury, had in ancient times considerable power. It determined the taxation to be paid by the clergy, enacted ecclesiastical canons, and was consulted by the government on important matters affecting the national profession of religion. Their power having been much abridged, they had been very inactive for some time; when, subsequently to the revolution in 1688, the party most opposed to the new order of things "sedulously propogated a doctrine, that the Convocation ought to be advised with upon all questions affecting the church, and ought

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and that we do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by Divine Inspiration, according as expressed in the Act of Exemption or Toleration, anno primo Gulielmi et Mariæ, which being legally provided, and by us sincerely and publicly owned to authority, and one condition of our present and religious liberty; we think it very hard and undue measure, as well as uncharitable, to be joined either with Socinians or Arians, and branded with "infidelity, damnable errors," which you say have been "embraced and propagated by the sect of Quakers, whom, in several of their treatises, catechisms,

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even to watch over its interests, as the parliament did over those of the kingdom." By this means the activity of the clergy, and especially of the high church party was stirred up in these synods; and as they had been chiefly promoted by those who were most favourable to arbitrary civil power and ecclesiastical domination, so their proceedings were characterized by the same spirit; and it is worthy of notice, that whilst fulminating against the poor Quakers, and those great principles of religious liberty which now pass for incontrovertable truisms, the Lower House distinguished itself by the most factious spirit, and especially by insolence towards the bishops who were less bigotted, and whom while pretending to assert the Divine right of episcopacy, they laboure to deprive of their lawful preeminence in the Anglican synod. "In the ferment of that age," says Hallam, "it was expedient for the state to scatter a little dust over the angry insects; the Convocation was accordingly prorogued in 1717, and has never again sat for any business." *Const. Hist. Vol. III.*

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and primers, have taught the rudiments of Christian faith in such a manner, as to make it seem to be little more than a complicated system of deism and enthusiasm;" to which is added, "from the wicked principles thus disseminated, as wicked practices have followed."

Unto all which we sincerely and humbly answer:

I. We know nothing, in point of Christian doctrine and principle, more openly and apparently asserted and propagated by the said people called Quakers, than the Divinity of Christ, and essential union of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This holy and blessed Scripture Trinity we have always stood for, in real faith and practice.

II. The Divinity of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that He is the Eternal Word, the true God, as well as truly man; being expressly agreeable to Holy Scripture testimony, viz. [a] that He is the Mighty God, &c. [b] the Eternal Word, whereby all things were made: [c] who is over all, God blessed for ever: [d] God created all things by Jesus Christ: [e] who is the true God and Eternal Life; by whom also the worlds were made: the Divine

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[a] Isa. ix. 6. [b] John i. [c] Rom. ix. 5. [d] Ephes. iii. 9. [e] Heb. i.

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[f]three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are One.

The blessed Trinity in the unity of Divine Essence, is manifest in the wonderful works of God, both in the old and new creation, and the mystery thereof revealed and experienced in the new birth.

III. Thus we sincerely believe and confess the Divinity and Deity of the Eternal Son of God, Christ Jesus, with respect to his being the Eternal Word, which was in the [g]beginning; [h]before Abraham was; [i]from Everlasting; [k]glorified with the Father before the world began: and in respect to the fulness of the Godhead (yea, all fulness) [l]dwelling in Him; and as [m]all power in heaven and earth is given unto Him: and as by whom also [n]God made the worlds.

All which seriously considered, thus to assert the glorious Divinity of the Son of God, cannot be inconsistent with his Divine wisdom, love, and great condescension in assuming the holy humanity, his pure and perfect manhood for our sakes, even for the redemption of man-

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[f] 1 John v. 7. [g] John i. 1–4. [h] John viii. 58.
[i] Mic. v. 2. [k] John xvii. 5. [l] Col. i. 19. ii. 9.
[m] Matt. xxviii. 18. [n] Heb i. 2. xi. 3.

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kind. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness," saith the apostle, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit," &c. And surely excellent is the mystery of Christ, and the true spiritual knowledge of Him, and his riches unsearchable. *Ephes.* iii. 4–9. *2 Cor.* v. 16. *Col.* i. 27.

IV. The immortality of the soul of man, and the true notions and distinctions of good and evil, together with the just judgments and suitable rewards, whether in this or the next life, we never deemed groundless or vain, as the ranters, corrupt libertines, and atheists have done and do: but constantly believe and assert the righteousness of God, in justifying the righteous and condemning the wicked: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." *2 Cor.* v. 10.

V. As to infidelity and damnable errors, &c. charged upon the Quakers; as we are not conscious to ourselves thereof, we do not find any colour of proof nor whence they originally arose; except from some persecuting adversaries' bitter invectives, or pamphlets of some apostates who are gone out from us into enmity, and dissembling conformists, to ingratiate themselves into favour and credit with the Church

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of England, by perverting our principles and calumniating us and our Christian religion and Society. And we know no catechisms or primers owned or promoted among us, about the rules of the Christian faith, but such as are agreeable to Holy Scripture. Witness Robert Barclay's Catechism, and the Christian testimonies and answers of divers other approved authors among us, wherein the forementioned doctrines and principles of the Christian faith are sincerely asserted; although we have been greatly misrepresented by some of our adversaries' false and fictitious catechisms, in our names, mock dialogues and trials, and silly, idle romances, &c.

VI. Our embracing and confessing Christ Jesus, as the true Light which enlightens mankind, and the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit, under the New Covenant Dispensation, has been by some ignorant and antichristian spirits, in contempt, rendered deism and enthusiasm, though the same be often prayed for and confessed in the liturgy of the Church of England. And we hope our embracing those Christian principles, namely, that of the true Light, *John* i., Divine Inspiration, and being led by the Spirit of God, *John* xvi. 13, *Rom.* viii. 14, will not produce any wicked practices, as dissolute behaviour, oaths, impre-

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cations, growth of immorality, profaneness, drunkenness, and lewdness, &c. all which are utter abominations to our religious and Christian principles and Society; and therefore ought not to be imputed to us or our profession, as any cause thereof. But it is rather feared, that the ignorance, libertinism, and debauchery of too many of the priests in this nation, have in a great measure contributed thereunto; together with the former books, allowing sports and pastimes on the Sabbath day.

VII. It is very sad and lamentable, that infidelity, libertinism, and scepticism should so much abound and prevail in any Church professing Christianity, as in this nation where so much of religion and holiness of profession and conversation are pretended. But people's fruits must show whose plants and what trees they are.

VIII. We believe as you say, and it is matter of sorrow and grief of heart: "That one fountain from whence the corruptions of religion and morality have flowed, is on your theatres; and that things sacred and serious have been handled after the most ludicrous manner, &c.; and that on them obscenity, blasphemous allusions to Holy Writ, and various sorts of profaneness have abounded, &c.; and that the vicious images, painted to the life, have made

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such impressions on the minds of the young and unwary as are not easy to be defaced."

And the like account is given by the Upper House in their representation, viz. "That this profaneness hath been much increased by the licentiousness of the stage, where the worst examples have been recommended to imitation." And further, they propose to the queen, viz. "We entertain not the least doubt of your majesty's firm resolution to render the laws and proclamations, set forth for the suppression of immorality and profaneness, useful to that purpose, by an impartial and vigorous execution of them; and to reform the corruptions of the stage, which have been so instrumental in vitiating young and innocent minds, and given so just offence to all serious and devout Christians."

We heartily wish that what both your houses have proposed in this case last mentioned, may be truly pursued; so as the government may be prevailed upon totally to suppress, remove, and prohibit those stage plays and the actors of them, seeing they are of so irreligious and impious a tendency, and cause of ridiculing true religion and debauching youth. We are persuaded they are greatly offensive to God, and injurious to many poor souls; and we think it behoves you to enquire, if some of your priests

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do not resort to those play houses, especially of the younger sort, as is reported; and how culpable such are if they do. And whether it be not a great dishonour to your profession and function, for any of them to take the severest, most chargeable, and ruinous courses, in prosecuting divers of our Friends for small tithes, as unto imprisonments, sequestrations, &c. seeing they have a more easy way to recover them by late laws? Is not this severe course rather an indication of revenge, than of Christianity or humanity? And we think you cannot reasonably suppose, that such unmercifulness and oppressions will any ways redound or tend to the honour of your religion, church, or profession.

About restraining the press, so much pressed, there had need to be a just and equal care that it be not put into the power of any one party, to judge, stop, or license books, as they please; for therein may be great partiality and injustice, in permitting only books of their own party, if they relate to their religious persuasions, and stopping all others; and then many that may be unjustly defamed and grossly calumniated, and their principles perverted (as many have been served) by scandalous pamphlets, fictitious romances, and false dialogues, would not be suffered to answer in defence of

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themselves; which would be very unfair, partial, and unjust, if the press should be restrained only to a party. Yet it is very meet it should be so far restrained, as not to be suffered to print either seditious news or pamphlets against the government, or tending to introduce or promote vice, immorality, impiety, or profaneness; and that all licentious, obscene books and pamphlets, tending to deprave and viciate youth, be stopped and suppressed.

To conclude, the premises seriously considered, we pray you be more charitable in your judgment towards us, and do as you would be done by; and not ready to credit or receive reproaches or calumnies against us, the said people, from invidious incendiaries, tending to raise persecution; for that would not tend to the glory of God, your honour, or inward peace.

We humbly hope the queen of Great Britain, (whom God preserve,) is better principled and more just, than to prejudge us upon injurious misrepresentations, or to receive evil reports or aspersions against us, who are her peaceable protestant subjects.

G. WHITEHEAD,
W. MEAD.

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A BRIEF ENQUIRY

Upon an Invidious Book, or Pamphlet, styled, "A Winding-sheet for Quakerism;" lately delivered to the members of parliament; and also said to be, "A brief enquiry into the toleration of the Quakers; by Edward Cockson," who styles himself M. A. Rector of Westcot Barton in the County of Oxon.

Together with a few Queries, proposed to the Lower House of Convocation, relating to the said book, seriously to consider of.

Part III.

Whereas the design and scope of the said pretended Winding-sheet appears to be against the toleration, and to have the same taken away, especially from the people called Quakers in the first place, as being the principal objects of his envy and fury, the meaning thereof is, to take away the liberty of their conscience, respecting their religious exercise in the worship of God in their solemn assemblies, legally tolerated; which to deprive them of, would tend either to make them atheists, or hypocritical conformists; or rather, if that cannot be effected, to expose them to all such severities,

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penalties, and persecutions, as formerly they suffered deeply under: and not only so, but the same legal severities and sanguinary punishments, as, under the law of Moses, were provided against blasphemers of the Name of God, false prophets, and other high offenders, are urged and applied against the said people, and as being still in force under the Gospel administration, p. 6. As if nothing would satisfy his fury, short of the utter destruction of the said people. And for what cause alleged or pretended by him? Even for no less than heresies and blasphemies. Oh sad! And what are those chiefly, viz.

1. "That the professors of Quakerism prefer heathenism to true Christianity," p. 3.

Answer. That were a sad error and heresy indeed, to prefer heathenism to true Christianity, if we may take heathenism to be idolatry and impiety, as truly it is. But it is a gross falsehood and perversion against the people called Quakers, and not deducible from their writings, if justly quoted. For herein the man puts no difference between heathenism, and the gentile divinity professed, together with the piety and morality practised by many of the philosophers and others; both of which the Quakers have commended, not preferred to true Christianity, but as agreeable thereto, and included therein,

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against all false Christians and hypocrites, under the profession of Christianity, perverted and abused by their sin pleasing and sinners' indulging doctrines and corrupt conversations, who argue for continuance of sin the term of life, contrary to the divinity, piety, and Christianity found in divers heathen writers. This is the true state of the Quakers' case, in the point.

2. "As for us of the Church of England, their spite against us is most superlative," p. 3.

Answer. This is a great mistake: we do not hate any of their persons; no, not the priests, but their corrupt practices, covetousness, envy, pride, persecution, where found among them who persecute and imprison our Friends, and many times take away their goods to great excess; sometimes for a small value claimed.

3. "That their great Robert Barclay adviseth to have our glebes and tithes taken from us, and to put them into the public treasury for the payment of taxes; and declares, that this is the only way soundly to reform us," p. 4. Apol. p. 340.

Answer. A sad complaint! How hard would this pinch mercenary preachers! Yet we hope it will not prove us hereticks or guilty of heresy; no more than Christ's ministers were, in preaching the Gospel freely, as they had freely received and were commanded by Him.

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And the apostle Paul was so much of Robert Barclay's mind, as that tithes and oblations or offerings were discontinued under the Gospel Dispensation, as being ended by Christ Jesus, the one Offering; and the priesthood that took tithes changed from Levi to Christ, who came of the tribe of Judah, not of Levi. And many of the protestant reformers and martyrs were also of the same judgment, against the payment of tithes under the Gospel and New Covenant Dispensation. And how strongly and clearly does the apostle argue this case, for Christ's ending the first priesthood and law of tithes and offerings. *Heb.* vii.—x.

4. On *Heb.* x. 23, 28, 29, "The whole place," saith the rector, "seems chiefly to have respect to such heretieks as deny Christ Jesus and the efficacy of his blood, as it is plain the Quakers do," quoth he, p. 7.

Answer. Where is it plain, that the Quakers deny Christ Jesus and the efficacy of his blood? I am sure such denial is expressly contrary to the principle and profession of the people called Quakers; and therefore this adversary might have been horribly ashamed to rank the said people among heretieks, upon such notorious calumnies, thereby to render them incapable of the toleration, and consequently to expose them to severe persecutions and ruin.

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5. "About the Sacred Trinity," he saith, "that the Quakers cannot, dare not honestly declare the same, in the same sense the compilers of the Act of Toleration understood the words, viz. That God the Father is a distinct person from Jesus Christ, and from the Holy Spirit; and that they are such a Three, as neither are nor can be more or less than Three," page 11.

Answer. We hope we are not justly chargeable with heresy, for confessing the blessed Trinity or Divine Three, in Holy Scripture terms, according as is declared in the said act, viz. "That we, the said people, do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his Eternal Son, and in the Holy Spirit, One God blessed for ever."

Though this profession and confession has given satisfaction to the civil government, as being both Christian and scriptural, yet it does not satisfy the said rector; but he will needs make himself an expositor of the sense and understanding of the law-makers, p. 11, and would impose other terms than the law requires in the case. We think it very unfair and uncharitable, to be deemed guilty of heresy for not confessing our faith in unscriptural terms; while we confess the Eternal Deity in plain Scripture terms, also allowed of by act of par-

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liament, as the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, *Matt.* xxviii. 19. 1 *John* v. 7, and their union in the Divine Essence.

Observe, Edward Cockson, M.A. rector, so called, in order to have the people called Quakers punished, thus proceeds to instances, viz.

Page 5. "God hath imprinted it in the hearts of all mankind, to vindicate his honour, and to punish all that are under their jurisdiction who dishonour Him. Thus Artaxerxes, king of Persia, having granted to the Jews that were in his dominions, that as many of them as pleased might return with Ezra to Jerusalem, he thereupon makes a decree for the establishment of the true worship of the true God, &c. And mark what follows: 'Whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment,' *Ezra* vii. 13, 25, 26. And Ezra blessed God for this decree, and put it in execution accordingly," *Ezra* x. 7, 8.

Whereupon I query of the said Convocation, viz.

Query 1. How can this instance warrant or excuse persecution against peaceable dissenting protestants, either to death, banishment, confiscation of goods, or imprisonment, for wor-

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shiping the true God as persuaded in conscience, though differing in manner or form from that which is national?

2. Did not the said king of Persia grant free liberty of conscience to the Jews, to worship the God of heaven as it was imprinted in their hearts or they persuaded according to his laws? Where was then any compulsion to the contrary, so as to enforce them to any national worship of the Persians or other nations?

3. And was not Artaxerxes, king of Persia, both charitable and generous to Israel, in granting them such free liberty as that as many of them as were minded, of their own free will, should go up to Jerusalem with Ezra? Also affording them great accommodation and encouragement, *Ezra* vii.: as also did Cyrus, king of Persia, before him, *chap.* i.

4. And did not the Lord put it into the hearts of these great kings, to grant this free religious liberty and encouragement unto his people?

5. And did they not therein excel all persecuting kings and emperors, and all such priests as would incense rulers to persecute us for our religion and conscience towards God?

6. But will nothing serve or please your rector now, against the Quakers, but either the penalty of death, or banishment, or confiscation

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of goods, or imprisonment? These have been tried already, in great measure, for their peaceable, religious, and solemn assemblies; though the said king of Persia could never intend those penalties against Israel for their religion or worship, having so greatly encouraged them therein.

Rector, p. 6. "He only who was supreme was properly custos utriusque tabulæ, to him was committed the care to punish murderers, adulterers, and thieves, &c. and also idolaters, blasphemers, false prophets, &c. none of which he was to tolerate, but to root them out of his dominions, *Exod.* xxii. 18, 20. *Deut.* xiii. 1, 2, 3, 5. xvii. 2-8, 12. *Lev.* xxiv. 16, with many other places. Now that these commands are obligatory to Christian magistrates, under the Gospel administration also, will appear if we consider, 1st, That none of them were ever revoked, repealed, or cancelled by Christ or any of his apostles. 2ndly, Ratio immutabilis facit præceptum immutabile, the very same reasons for which these commandments were at first given, remain still and are as strong as ever. Blasphemies, idolatries, and false prophecies are the same sins still, and God is the same God still, and hates these sins as much now as ever."

Whereupon I enquire of the Convocation:

Q. 1. Are you of the same judgment or opinion

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with your rector, that blasphemers and false prophets and false teachers are to be stoned to death by Christian magistrates, under the Gospel administration, as blasphemers and false prophets were under the law of Moses, *Deut.* xiii. quoted by the rector? And must Gospel ministers now be judges in cases of life and death, as priests were then? *Deut.* xvii. 9–12.

Rector, p. 7. "And God has the same power to punish now as ever. If therefore God hath at any time forbidden those sins, He forbids them still; and the same punishments that by his command were once to be inflicted for them, are still to be inflicted, till they are by Him revoked or altered; for where the same causes for the same punishments are perpetual, there the same punishments ought to be perpetual also."

2. Note, under the administration of the law of Moses, and Old Covenant, not only false prophets, blasphemers, and idolaters, &c. but also sabbath-breakers, rebellious sons to their parents, as drunkards, riotous persons, whoremongers, and adulterers, were to be stoned to death, *Lev.* xx. 2. xxiv. 14, 15. *Numb.* xv. 35, 36. *Deut.* xiii. 5, 10. xvii. 5. xxi. 21. and xxii. 21, 24.

3. Are you of the same judgment with your rector in these cases, that all such offenders as

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mentioned should be stoned to death, under the Gospel administration, by Christian magistrates?

4. And would it not affect and somewhat thin your own society or Church, to have all whoremongers and adulterers, rebellious sons and false teachers stoned to death? And would not that make sad and bloody work in the land? Or would that be the way to convert such offenders, or send them to heaven?

5. Has your rector in these cases preached like a minister of Christ, of the Gospel or New Testament?

6. Did our blessed Lord Jesus Christ give sentence against the woman taken in adultery, that she should be stoned to death? Or rather did He not show more mercy to her than her accusers and persecutors would have done, when He convicted and silenced them, and said unto her: "Hath no man condemned thee?" "No, Lord," said she. "Neither do I condemn thee," said He; "go and sin no more," *John* viii. 3–11.

Rector, p. 7. "The New Testament is so far from repealing those laws, (that is, of the Old,) that it rather more strongly enforces them. For the apostle having exhorted us to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, &c. *Heb.* x. 23–28, he adds, *ver.* 28,

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29: "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God," &c. The whole place seems to have respect to such hereticks as deny Christ Jesus and the efficacy of his blood, as it is plain the Quakers do," &c.

Q. 1. What sorer punishment would your rector have inflicted upon the Quakers than death?

Note, but he is a false accuser and an unjust judge therein, and this charge against the Quakers mentioned, is utterly false, and contrary to our Christian principle, of our love and respect to our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and his precious blood, &c.

2. But if we were guilty of error or heresy in this or any other point of Christianity, were it not more Christian for your rector, in a Gospel spirit to endeavour our conviction and conversion by Holy Scripture, on a true state of matter of fact, than to endeavour our destruction, or to have us stoned to death or our brains knocked out? we being really unwilling to be tenacious in any error, if convicted thereof. May we not say: "From all such cruel, hard hearted, and unmerciful men, good Lord deliver us?"

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Rector, p. 7. ibid. "This very thing was prophesied of, even in Gospel times, that in those very days false prophets should be cut off, *Zech.* xiii. 2, 3. And St. Peter makes false prophets and false teachers to be equivalent, 2 *Pet.* ii. 1, &c."

Whereupon I enquire of the Convocation:

Q. 1. Does your judgment agree with your rector's concerning that prophecy, *Zech.* xiii. 2, 3; that is, that the same was intended for Gospel times, or that under the New Testament or Gospel administration, false prophets and false teachers should be cut off by the magistrate's sword, or stoned to death?

Note, of false prophets, mentioned *Zech.* xiii. 2, 3, who were to be cut off, *ver.* 3, it is said: "And when any shall yet prophesy, his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, thou shalt not live, for thou speakest lies in the Name of the Lord; and his father and his mother shall thrust him through when he prophesieth."

2. Must his father and mother then be his executioners in the Gospel times, literally taken, as your rector seems to carry the text, *Zech.* xiii. 2, 3, to have such as he deems false prophets and hereticks, &c. cut off and put to death? And if by their fathers and mothers, what bloody, unnatural, and inhuman work

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would this make among professed Christians, for parents to kill their own children!

3. And where do you find any texts in the New Testament, enforcing the killing or stoning to death either false prophets, blasphemers, or hereticks? but admonition, rejection, or leaving them to the judgment of God, if obstinate and impenitent; and giving open warning to others against such, and their pernicious doctrines, practices, and destruction, as the holy apostles did, *2 Pet.* ii. and *Jude's* epistle, &c.

Seeing your said rector, Edward Cockson, appears so zealous for the law of Moses and that of the king of Persia, *Ezra* vii. 26, to be executed upon such as he judges hereticks, blasphemers, false prophets, false teachers, and idolaters, &c.

I would ask him or any of you his brethren these questions:

Q. 1. If you do not deem the papists hereticks, idolaters, and blasphemers, in their doctrine and belief of transubstantiation, their eucharist, their sacrament of the altar, and adoration given thereunto, as to Christ Jesus his body and blood?

2. Would you have them cut off or stoned to death, who are of that persuasion and religion or profession with the Church of Rome, or only the Quakers?

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3. Would it be either Christian or safe for any, esteemed protestant ministers, to follow papists' examples, so as to excite the supreme magistrate or civil government, to cut off or put to death those whom they think or judge hereticks, blasphemers, idolaters, &c.

4. Does not the Church of Rome judge all, both you and us, who dissent from that Church, to be hereticks? And what is the consequence aimed at thereby, but to cut off all such dissenters, if such a persecuting power should be permitted to prevail? So that according to this rector's notion, may not protestants cut off all papists, and papists cut off all protestants; and so all professors of Christianity become extinct?

5. Are not persecutors apt to misapply those laws intended against notorious offenders, to condemn, punish, and destroy the innocent and the righteous; as did the Jews who stoned the prophets? 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 21. *Matt.* xxi. 35. xxiii. 37. *Luke* xiii. 34. And they took up stones to stone Christ, falsly charging Him with blasphemy, *John* x. 31–33. xi. 8. And they stoned Stephen, *Acts* vii. 58, 59. And they stoned Paul for preaching the Gospel of Christ Jesus, *Acts* xiv. 19.

6. Can you reasonably suppose it will be for the honour of your Church, to allow of any

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of your brethren, rectors, ministers, or members, to endeavour to incense the government to severe persecution, as this your rector Edward Cockson has done ?

Although I have endeavoured to be brief in this enquiry, yet I am concerned, on a retrospection, to add something further.

Whereas the said rector would have the supreme magistrate not only the custos utriusque tabulæ, which is a high undertaking ; and would have the care committed to him of punishing not only murderers, adulterers, and thieves, &c. but also all idolaters, blasphemers, and false prophets, so as not to tolerate any of them, but to root them out of his dominions, p. 6: here he has cut out heavy work for the supreme magistrate and governors. But who must be judge, and upon whose evidence ? If the priest and levite, or invidious persecuting rector, we may expect no compassion, no mercy nor justice from him or them, who have prejudged and condemned us and our case without proof, or any just or clear evidence of matter of fact. As this our arbitrary judge and dictator has passed his judgment, and black characters of idolaters, blasphemers, and false prophets, even unto banishment and death, &c.

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aforehand; without any judicial trial or Gospel administration or law thereof, for the punishments assigned by him; to make the civil magistrate rather a breaker of the two tables, than custos utriusque tabulæ. For this adversary's invectives do not tend to excite the civil magistrate either to justice or to that love which is the fulfilling and end of the law or decalogue, but to extreme severity and persecution against his neighbours; which is far from loving his neighbour as himself. It would become him and his brethren to be better examples and preachers, in spirit, conversation, and doctrine, than any of them to be incendiaries to the persecution and ruin of their quiet neighbours.

And whereas our persecuting adversary would have the same severities inflicted upon those he deems hereticks, &c. under the Gospel administration, as were commanded to be inflicted under the legal upon blasphemers, &c.; let us a little farther examine his proofs.

If *Rom.* xiii. 4 be insisted upon, and it be thence inferred that the magistrate should execute wrath upon false teachers, &c. because he bears not the sword in vain; surely the holy apostle did not intend that the magistrate, in the Gospel day, should kill or cut off false teachers, or cause them to be stoned to death who are mis-

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taken in some doctrine or prophecy; but rather that they should be better persuaded, convinced, and converted by sound doctrine.

And in his exhorting to be subject to the higher powers, *Rom.* xiii. 1. he could not mean, that the Christian believers in Christ, then in Rome or elsewhere, should subject their faith, religion, conscience, and worship, to the wills of heathen emperors at Rome or to the kings or rulers of the earth who were of different religions; for then there would have been no persecutions, no martyrs of Jesus Christ under the Roman emperors or others, as there were: if their subjection had been such, they must only have been of the ruler's religion, whether idolater, papist, mahometan, &c. It is no Christian argument therefore, to strain the text *Rom.* xiii. to such an uncertain, unchristian, and I may say, irreligious subjection; and not that of true Christians and martyrs of Jesus, who rather submitted to deep sufferings than violate their conscience or Christian religion.

1. The punishment mentioned *Heb.* x. 28, 29, of such adversaries, rebellious and hardened apostates and contemners of Christ and the blood of his covenant, appears not to be intended of such like temporal punishment or death by the magistrate, as that was to him that despised Moses's law under that dispensation;

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but rather Divine vengeance or fiery indignation from God, to devour such adversaries and wilful contemners of the Truth. See *Heb.* x.

Certainly if any persons do so backslide, and become such wilful sinners and adversaries against Christ and his Gospel Dispensation, after they have received the knowledge of the Truth, they do not only lose and forfeit the blessed effects and benefits of Christ's sacrifice, blood, and atonement, but do incur much heavier and sorer punishment from the hand of God, as Judge, than that of a temporal death to the despisers of Moses's law.

Our God is and will be a consuming fire to his adversaries and enemies, who continue in rebellion against Him, his Light, Truth, and Spirit of Grace, doing despite thereunto: and it is and will be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God; when there remains no more a sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation to devour the adversaries.

2. But now as we profess Christianity and the dispensation of Christ and of the New Covenant of mercy and grace, &c. let us consider what punishments did ever Christ or his Gospel ministers assign, or excite the civil magistrates unto against persons in error or heresy? Did they tell them they must banish

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them, or hang them, or burn them, or stone them to death? I think not. I find no such precept in the New Testament.

The sadducees who believed no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, *Matt.* xxii. 23. *Acts* xxiii. 8. *Mark* xii. 18. *Luke* xx. 27; did Christ deliver them into the hands of the magistrates, to punish them or stone them to death, according to the law of Moses? No, surely! He rather told them: "Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God;" and taught them better, to convince them of their error and to persuade them out of it.

And the man that was an heretick, what punishment did the holy apostle assign or direct against him? but after admonition once or twice to reject him?

And to have "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; but rather to reprove them."

And as we freely acknowledge magistracy or the civil government to be God's ordinance, appointed for the punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well; so they that undertake that office and trust upon them, had need to be careful that they do not condemn the innocent and acquit the guilty; and that they be tender of men's lives, liberties, and proper-

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ties, especially where no overt act, demeriting such penalties, can be proved. And also that they be careful not to condemn persons upon reports and defamations of invidious or mercenary informers; as Saul, upon the report of Doeg the Edomite, caused fourscore and five of the Lord's priests then to be slain, even by the mischievous Edomite, when Saul's own servants or footmen would not do it, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 18.

"He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God; and he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain," 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 3, 4. So that the just ruler in the fear of God, must have a clear understanding and judgment in the fear of God and his Light, therein to shine in justice, righteousness, mercy, and truth; which will be to the great comfort and refreshment of the righteous and tender in heart, who truly fear God.

It is mercy and truth whereby the king's throne is established; without which, thrones are tottering, shaken, and soon overturned. And therefore all men in power and authority should diligently mind God's power and wisdom, whereby they may stand and rule in righteousness. For saith that Wisdom: "By

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me kings reign, and princes decree justice : by me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth," *Prov.* viii. 15, 16.

It is not because they are made kings or princes, that they reign and rule, and decree justice and are established ; but because they are under Wisdom's conduct who are just men and rulers fearing God, before whom they must appear, and be accountable to Him as their Judge, who is the righteous Judge of all.

To conclude, if any should suppose that I have reflected too hardly upon our adversary the rector, which may affect others of his function, I may sincerely tell them :

1. I never met with any persecuting adversary, that has written more invidiously to incense the government to extreme persecution against us, &c. than he has done ; as appears to me and many others.

2. I have not at all designed to cast his offence upon any others of his function or priesthood, who are not guilty of the same or like offence, nor countenancers or approvers thereof ; as I believe many of them are not, but of a better principle, nature, and temper, than to endeavour to raise persecution, to ruin their honest, peaceable neighbours for religion and conscience : as the difference is apparent,

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by the severe persecutions our Friends meet withal from some of the clergy, and the moderation of others.

I pray God in mercy humble and subject all to his wisdom and conduct, by his Divine Power.

G. W.

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THE

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

AND

SOCIETY

OF THE

People called Quakers,

CLEARED FROM

THE REPROACH OF THE LATE DIVISION OF A FEW IN SOME PART OF AMERICA;

As not being justly chargeable upon the Body of the said People, there or elsewhere.

Printed in the Year 1693.

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them diligently which cause division and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them, *Rom.* xvi. 17.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you, *Ephes.* iv. 31, 32.

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THE

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, &c.

WHEREAS divers accounts have been lately published in print, of some late division and disputes between some persons under the name of Quakers in Pennsylvania, about several fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, (as is pretended by one party,) which being particularly mentioned, and thereupon occasion very unduly taken by our adversaries, to reproach both the Christian ministry and whole body of the people commonly called Quakers, and their holy and Christian profession, both in England and elsewhere, though no way concerned in the said division or matters charged; but rather grieved and troubled at it, and at the indiscreet and reproachful management thereof in print, to the amusing and troubling the world therewith, and giving occasion to the loose, ignorant, and profane, to slight and contemn the Truth, and the interest of the tender religion of our Lord Jesus Christ;

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We are, therefore, tenderly concerned for Truth's sake in behalf of the said people, (as to the body of them, and for all of them who are sincere to God, and faithful to their Christian principle and profession,) to use our just endeavours to remove the reproach, and all causeless jealousies concerning us, touching those doctrines of Christianity, or any of them pretended or supposed, to be in question in the said division; in relation whereunto we do, in the fear of God, and in simplicity and plainness of his Truth received, solemnly and sincerely declare what our Christian belief and profession has been, and still is, in respect to Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God; his suffering, death, resurrection, glory, light, power, great day of judgment, &c.

We sincerely profess faith in God by his only begotten son Jesus Christ, as being our Light and Life, our only way to the Father, and also our only Mediator and Advocate with the Father[1].

That God created all things; He made the worlds by his Son Jesus Christ, He being that powerful and Living Word of God by whom all things were made[2]; and that the Father, the

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[1] Heb. xii. 2. 1 Pet. i. 21. John xiv. 6. 1 Tim. ii. v.
[2] Ephes. iii. 9. John i. 1, 2, 3. Heb. i. 2.

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Word, and the Holy Spirit are one in divine being inseparable; one true, living, and eternal God blessed for ever[3].

Yet that this Word or Son of God, in the fulness of time took flesh, became perfect man—according to the flesh descended and came of the seed of Abraham and David;[4] but was miraculously conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary.[5] And also further declared powerfully to be the Son of God, according to the spirit of sanctification, by the resurrection from the dead.[6]

That in the Word or Son of God, was life; and the same life was the Light of men; and that He was that true Light which enlightens every man coming into the world.[7] And therefore that men are to believe in the Light, that they may become children of the Light.[8] Hereby we believe in Christ the Son of God, as He is the Light and Life within us; and wherein we must needs have sincere respect and honour to and belief in Christ, as in his own unapproachable and incomprehensible glory and fulness,[9] as He is the Fountain of Life and Light, and giver thereof unto us; Christ, as in Himself and as in us, being not divided. And that, as man, Christ died for our sins, rose again, and

[3] 1 John v. 7. [4] Rom. i. 3, 4. [5] Mat. i. 23. [6] Rom. i. 3, 4.
[7] John i. 4. 9. [8] John xii. 36. Isa. ii. 5. [9] 1 Tim. vi. 16.

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was received up into glory in the heavens :[1] He having, in his dying for all, been that one great universal offering and sacrifice for peace, atonement, and reconciliation between God and man.[2] And He is the propitiation not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world.[3] We were reconciled by his death, but saved by his life.

That Jesus Christ who sitteth at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, is yet our King, High Priest, and Prophet ;[5] in his church a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man.[6] He is Intercessor and Advocate with the Father in heaven, and there appearing in the presence of God for us ;[7] being touched with the feeling of our infirmities, sufferings, and sorrows ; and also by his Spirit in our hearts He maketh intercession according to the will of God, crying, Abba, Father.[8]

For any whom God hath gifted[9] and called sincerely to preach faith in the same Christ, both as within and without us, cannot be to preach two Christs, but one and the same Lord

[1] 1 Pet. iii. 18. 1 Tim. iii. 16, Mat. xix. 28, and xxv. 31. Luke ix. 26, and xxiv. 26. [2] Rom. v. 10, 11. Heb. ii. 17, 18. Ephes. ii. 16, 17. Col. i. 20, 21, 22. [3] 1 John ii. 2. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Heb. ii. 9. [5] Zech. ix. 9. Luke xix. 38. John xii. 15. Heb. iii. 1. 6. Deut. xviii. 15. 18. Acts iii. 22, and vii. 37. [6] Heb. viii. 1, 2. [7] Heb. vii. 25. Heb. ix. 24. [8] Rom. viii. 26, 27, 34. Gal. iv. 6. [9] Ephes. iii. 7. 1 Peter iv. 10.

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Jesus Christ;[1] having respect to those degrees of our spiritual knowledge of Christ Jesus in us[2], and to his own unspeakable fulness and glory[3], as in Himself, in his own entire being; wherein Christ Himself and the least measure of his light or life as in us or in mankind, are not divided nor separable, any more than the sun is from its light. And as He ascended far above all heavens, that He might fill all things[4], his fulness cannot be comprehended or contained in any finite creature[5], but is in measure known and experienced in us, as we are capable to receive the same; as of his fulness we have received grace for grace. Christ our Mediator received the Spirit, not by measure[6] but in fulness; but to every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of his gift[7].

That the Gospel of the grace of God should be preached in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost[8], being one[9] in power, wisdom, and goodness, and indivisible, or not to be divided in the great work of man's salvation.

We sincerely confess and believe in Jesus Christ, both as He is true God and perfect man,[10] and that He is the Author of our living faith in

[1] Cor. viii. 6. xv. 3. 8. [2] John xv. 26, and xvi. 13, 14, 15. [3] John i. 16. [4] Ephes. iv. 10. [5] Col. i. 19, and ii. 9. [6] John iii. 34. [7] Ephes. iv. 7. [8] Mat. xxviii. 19. [9] John i. 1, 2, 3, 4. [10] John i. 1, 2. Rom. ix. 5. 1 John v. 20. 1 Tim. iii. 5.

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the power and goodness of God, as manifest in his son Jesus Christ, and by his own blessed Spirit or Divine Unction revealed in us [1], whereby we inwardly feel and taste of his goodness [2], life, and virtue; so as our souls live and prosper by and in Him, and in the inward sense of this Divine Power of Christ, and faith in the same; and this inward experience is absolutely necessary to make a true, sincere, and perfect Christian in spirit and life.

That Divine honour and worship is due to the Son of God [3]; and that He is in true faith to be prayed unto, and the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ called upon, as the primitive Christians did [4], because of the glorious union or oneness of the Father and the Son [5]; and that we cannot acceptably offer up prayers or praises to God, nor receive a gracious answer or blessing from God, but in and through his dear Son Christ.

That Christ's body which was crucified, was not the Godhead, yet by the power of God was raised from the dead; and that the same Christ who was therein crucified, ascended into heaven and glory [6] is not questioned by us. His flesh saw no corruption;[7] it did not corrupt; but yet

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[1] 1 John ii. 20. 27. and i. 1. [2] 1 Peter ii. 3. John vi. 33. 35. 51. 57, 58. [3] John v. 23. Heb. i. 6. [4] 1 Cor. i. 2. Acts vii. 59. [5] John x. 30. 1 John v. 7. [6] Luke xxiv. 26. [7] Psalm xvi. 10. Acts ii. 31, and xiii. 35, 37.

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doubtless his body was changed into a more glorious[1] and heavenly condition than it was when subject to divers sufferings on earth; but how and what manner of change it met withal after it was raised from the dead, so as to become such a glorious body as it is declared to be, is too wonderful for mortals to conceive, apprehend, or pry into; and more meet for angels to see. The Scripture is silent therein, as to the manner thereof, and we are not curious to enquire or dispute it; nor do we esteem it necessary to make ourselves wise above[2] what is written, as to the manner or condition of Christ's glorious body as in heaven, any more than to enquire how Christ appeared in divers manners or forms[3], or how He came in among his disciples, the doors being shut[4]; or how He vanished out of their sight, after He was risen. However, we have cause to believe his body, as in heaven, is changed into a most glorious condition, far transcending what it was in on earth; otherwise how should our low body be changed, so as to be made like unto his glorious body[5]; for when He was on earth, and attended with sufferings, He was said to be like unto us in all things, sin only excepted[6]; which may

[1] Phil. iii. 21. [2] 1 Cor. iv. 4. 6. [3] Mark xvi. 12. John xx. 15. [4] John xx. 19, Luke xxiv. 36, 37, and xxiv. 31. [5] Phil. iii. 21. [6] Heb. ii. 17. & iv. 15.

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not be so said of Him as now in a state of glory, as He prayed for;[1] otherwise where would be the change both in Him and us?

True and living faith in Christ Jesus the Son of the Living God[2], has respect to his entire being and fulness; to Him entirely, as in Himself, and as all power in heaven and earth is given unto Him;[3] and also an eye and respect to the same Son of God[4], as inwardly making Himself known in the soul in every degree of his Light, Life, Spirit, Grace, and Truth; and as He is both the Word of Faith and a Quickening Spirit in us[5], whereby He is the immediate cause, author, object, and strength of our living faith in his Name and Power, and of the work of our salvation from sin and bondage of corruption. And the Son of God cannot be divided from the least or lowest appearance of his own Divine Light or Life in us or in mankind, no more than the sun from its own light; nor is the sufficiency of his Light within, by us set up in opposition to Him the Man Christ, or his fulness considered as in Himself, or without us; nor can any measure or degree of light received from Christ, as such, be properly called the fulness of Christ, or Christ as in fulness, nor

[1] John xvii. 5. [2] John xiv. 1. [3] Mat. xxviii. 18. xi. 27. John xvii. 2. Heb. i. 4. ii. 8. [4] John xiv. 23. xvii. 21, 22, 23, 24. 26. [5] 1 Cor. xv. 45. Rom. x. 7, 8.

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exclude Him, so considered, from being our complete Saviour: for Christ himself to be our Light, our Life and Saviour[1] is so consistent, that without his Light we could not know life, nor Him to save us from sin or deliver us from darkness, condemnation or wrath to come.

And where the least degree or measure of this Light and Life of Christ within, is sincerely waited for, followed, and obeyed, there is a blessed increase of light and grace known and felt; as the path of the just, it shines more and more until the perfect day;[2] and thereby a growing in grace, and in the knowledge of God and of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, hath been and is truly experienced. And this Light, Life, or Spirit of Christ within, for they are one Divine Principle, is sufficient to lead into all truth, having in it the divers ministrations both of judgment and mercy, both of law and gospel; even that gospel which is preached in every intelligent creature under heaven. It does not only, as in its first ministration, manifest sin, and reprove and condemn for sin; but also excites and leads them that believe in it to true repentance, and thereupon to receive that mercy, pardon, and redemption in Christ Jesus, which He has obtained for mankind, on those gospel terms

[1] John i. 4. 9. iii. 19, 20. xii. 35, 36, 46. viii. 12.
[2] Prov. iv. 18. Ps. xxxvi. 9.

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of faith in his Name, true repentance, and conversion to Christ, thereby required.

So that the Light and Life of the Son of God within, truly obeyed and followed, as being the principle of the second or new covenant, as Christ the Light is confessed to be, even as He is the Seed or Word of Faith in all men; this does not leave men or women who believe in the Light, under the first covenant nor as sons of the bondwoman, as the literal Jews were when gone from the Spirit of God and his Christ in them; but it naturally leads them into the new covenant, into the new and living way, and to the adoption of sons, to be children and sons of the freewoman, of Jerusalem from above.

It is true that we ought not to lay aside, nor should any undervalue, but highly esteem true preaching and the Holy Scriptures, and the sincere belief and faith of Christ as He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, together with Christ's inward and spiritual appearance and work of grace in the soul, livingly to open the mystery of his death, and perfectly to effect our reconciliation, sanctification, and justification; and where ever Christ qualifies and calls any to preach and demonstrate the mystery of his coming, death, and resurrection, &c. even among the gentiles, Christ ought ac-

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cordingly to be both preached, and believed and received.

Yet supposing there have been or are such pious and conscientious gentiles, in whom Christ was and is as the Seed or Principle of the second or new covenant, the Light, the Word of Faith, as is granted, and that such live uprightly and faithfully to that Light they have, or to what is made known of God in them, and who therefore, in that state, cannot perish, but shall be saved, as is also confessed; and supposing these have not the outward advantage of preaching, Scripture, or thence the knowledge of Christ's outward coming, and being outwardly crucified and risen from the dead, can such, thus considered, be justly excluded Christianity or the covenant of grace as to the virtue, life, and nature thereof, or truly deemed no Christians, or void of any Christian faith in the life and power of the Son of God within, or be only sons of the first covenant and bondwoman, like the literal outside Jews? Or must all be excluded any true knowledge or faith of Christ within them, unless they have the knowledge of Christ as without them? No sure! for that would imply insufficiency in Christ and his Light as within them, and frustrate God's good end and promise of Christ, and his free and universal love and grace to mankind in

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sending his Son. We charitably believe the contrary, that they must have some true faith and interest in Christ and his mediation, because of God's free love in Christ to all mankind, and Christ's dying for all men[1], and being given for a Light of the gentiles, and for salvation to the ends of the earth[2]. And because of their living up sincerely and faithfully to his Light in them, their being pious, conscientious, accepted, and saved, as is granted, we cannot reasonably think a sincere pious or godly man, wholly void of Christianity, of what nation soever he may be; because none can come to God or godliness but by Christ[3], by his Light and Grace in them: yet grant if there be such pious and sincere men or women as have not the Scripture, or knowledge of Christ as outwardly crucified, &c. they are not perfect Christians in all perfections, as in all knowledge, and understanding all points of doctrine, and outward profession of Christ; so that they are better than they profess or pretend to be; they are more Jews inward and Christians inward than in outward show or profession.

There are Christians sincere and perfect in kind or nature, in life and substance, though

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[1] 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. [2] Isaiah xlix. 6, Luke ii. 32. Acts xiii. 47. [3] John, xiv. 6.

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not in knowledge and understanding. A man or woman having the life and fruits of true Christianity, the fruits of the Spirit of Christ in them who can talk little thereof, or of creeds, points or articles of faith, yea many that cannot read letters, yet may be true Christians in spirit and life: and some could die for Christ that could not dispute for Him. And even infants that die in innocency, are not excluded the grace of God, or salvation in and by Christ Jesus; the image and nature of the Son of God being in some measure in them, and they under God's care and special providence. See *Matthew*, xviii. 2. 10.

And though we had the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and a belief of Christ crucified and risen, &c. we never truly knew the mystery thereof until we were turned to the Light of his Grace and Spirit within us; we knew not what it was to be reconciled by his death and saved by his life, or what it was to know the fellowship of his sufferings, the power of his resurrection, or to be made conformable unto his death—we knew not, until He opened our eyes and turned our minds from darkness unto his own Divine Light and Life within us.

Notwithstanding, we do so sincerely and greatly esteem and value the Holy Scriptures,

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preaching, and teaching of faithful divinely inspired, gifted, and qualified persons and ministers of Jesus Christ, as being great outward helps, and instrumental in his hand, and by his Spirit for conversion; where God is pleased to afford those outward helps and means; as that we neither do nor may oppose the sufficiency of the Light or Spirit of Christ within to such outward helps or means, so as to reject, disesteem, or undervalue them; for they all proceed from the same Light and Spirit, and tend to turn men's minds thereunto, and all centre therein.

Nor can the Holy Scriptures or true preaching without, be justly set in opposition to the Light or Spirit of God or Christ within; for his faithful messengers are ministers thereof, being sent to turn people to the same Light and Spirit in them[1].

It is certain that great is the mystery of godliness in itself, in its own being and excellency, namely, that God should be and was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.

And it is a great and precious mystery of

[1] Acts, xxvi. 18. Rom. xiii. 2. 2 Cor. iv. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 9. 1 John, ii. 8.

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godliness and Christianity also, that Christ should be spiritually and effectually in men's hearts, to save and deliver them from sin, satan, and bondage of corruption; Christ being thus revealed in true believers, and dwelling in their hearts by faith: Christ within the Hope of Glory, our Light and Life, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. And therefore this mystery of godliness, both as in its own being and glory, and also as in men, in many hid and in some revealed, hath been and must be testified, preached, and believed, where God is pleased to give commission and prepare people's hearts for the same, and not in man's will.

Concerning the resurrection of the dead, and the great day of judgment yet to come, beyond the grave or after death, and Christ's coming without us, to judge the quick and the dead, as divers questions are put in such terms: what the Holy Scriptures plainly declare and testify in these matters, we have great reason to credit and not to question, and have been always ready to embrace with respect to Christ and his apostles' own testimony and prophecies.

1. *For the Doctrine of the Resurrection.*

If in this life only we have hope in Christ,

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we are of all men most miserable, 1 *Cor.* xv. 19. We sincerely believe not only a resurrection in Christ from the fallen sinful state here, but a rising and ascending into glory with Him hereafter; that when He at last appears we may appear with him in glory, *Col.* iii. 4. 1 *John* iii. 2. But that all the wicked, who live in rebellion against the Light of Grace, and die finally impenitent, shall come forth to the resurrection of condemnation.

And that the soul or spirit of every man and woman shall be reserved in its own distinct and proper being, so as there shall be as many souls in the world to come as in this; and every seed, yea every soul, shall have its proper body, as God is pleased to give it, 1 *Cor.* xv. A natural body is sown, a spiritual body is raised; that being first which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. And though it is said this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; the change shall be such as flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption, 1 *Cor.* xv. We shall be raised out of all corruption and corruptibility, out of all mortality; and the children of God and of the resurrection, shall be equal to the angels of God in heaven[1].

[1] Matthew xxii. 30. Mark xii. 25. Luke xx. 36.

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And as the celestial bodies do far excel terrestrial; so we expect our spiritual bodies in the resurrection shall far excel what our bodies now are; and we hope none can justly blame us for thus expecting better bodies than now they are. Howbeit we esteem it very unnecessary to dispute or question how the dead are raised, or with what body they come; but rather submit that to the wisdom and pleasure of Almighty God.

2. *For the Doctrine of Eternal Judgment.*

God hath committed all judgment unto his Son Jesus Christ; and He is Judge both of quick and dead, and of the states and ends of all mankind, *John* v. 22. 27. *Acts* x. 42. 2 *Tim.* iv. 1. 1 *Pet.* iv. 5.

That there shall be hereafter a great harvest, which is the end of the world; a great day of judgment, and the judgment of that great day, as Holy Scripture is clear.[1] When the Son of [illegible] cometh in his glory, and all the holy [illegible] with Him; then shall He sit upon the throne of his glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations, &c. *Mat.* xxv. 31, 32. to the end, compared with *chap.* xxii. 31. *Mark* viii. 38. *Luke* ix. 26. and 1 *Cor.* xv. 52. 2 *Thes.* i. 7, 8. to the end, and 1 *Thes.* iv. 16. *Rev.* xx. 12, 13, 14, 15.

[1] Mat. xiii. 39, 40, 41. x. 15. xi. 24. Jude 6.

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That this blessed Heavenly Man, this Son of Man, who hath so deeply suffered, and endured so many great indignities and persecutions from his adversaries, both to Himself and his members and brethren, will at last, even in the last and great day, signally and manifestly appear in glory and triumph, attended with all his glorious heavenly host and retinue, before all nations, before all his enemies and those that have denied Him. This will be to their great terror and amazement: that this most glorious Heavenly Man and his brethren, that have been so much contemned and set at nought, should be thus exalted over their enemies and persecutors, in glory and triumph, is a righteous thing with God; and that they that suffer with Him, should appear with Him in glory and dignity when He thus appears at last. Christ was Judge of the world and the prince thereof [illegible] earth, *John* ix. 39. xii. 31; H[illegible] of the world, the wicke[illegible] by his Ligh[illegible] and consciences, *John* xvi. 8 11. *Mat.* xii. 18. 20. *Isa.* xlii. [illegible] *Rom.* ii. 16 1 *Pet.* iv. 6; And He will be the Judge and final determiner thereof in that great day appointed; God having appointed a day wherein He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained. Christ foretold, it shall be

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more tolerable for them of the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city or people that would not receive his messengers or ministers, &c. *Mat.* x. 15. xi. 24. *Mark* vi. 11. *Luke* x. 12. 14. It is certain that God knows how to deliver the godly out of all their trials and afflictions, and at last to bring them forth and raise them up into glory with Christ; so He knoweth also how to reserve the unjust and finally impenitent unto the day of judgment, to be punished, *2 Pet.* ii. 9. He will bring them forth unto the day of destruction, *Job* xxi. 30. The Lord can and will reserve such impenitent, presumptuous, and rebellious criminals, as bound under chains of darkness, as were the fallen angels, unto the judgment of the great day, *Jude* 6. *Mat.* xxv. 30. It is not for us to determine or dispute the manner how they shall be so reserved; but leave it to God; He knows how.

Touching the opinion of the revolution or transmigration of human souls, or their passing out of one body into another, &c. as it is deemed originally to have sprung from the heathen, and was received among Jews and some others by tradition, and said to be the opinion of our Empedocles, Pythagoras, and the Egyptians, and partly of Julian the apostate when he

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dreamed that the soul of Alexander the Great was crept into his carcass, or rather that he was Alexander himself in another body; and thereupon rejecting the suit of the Persians for peace, presumptuously proceeded in the war and to bloodshed against them, until, at unawares, he got his death's wound, according as is more fully related in history; particularly Socrates's Scholasticus, *lib.* 1. *ch.* 17. and *lib.* iii. *ch.* 18. *Eccles. Chron. fol.* 577. See also Dr. Hammond's Annotations on John ix. 1, 2, 3. We are not concerned in any such notion, but, as a people are wholly clear of it.

We deem it neither necessary to faith, nor safe to receive or defend, as either held by those heathen Egyptians, or Jews aforesaid; nor as it is insinuated in a late pamphlet of 200 Queries, concerning the doctrine of the Revolution of Human Souls, supposing twelve revolutions or twelve distinct intervals of life to every man, as being twelve several times born into the world; for each one to live or consummate the space of 1000 years on earth. Though this opinion of such revolution appears not to be a point in present controversy in the book aforesaid, or in Pennsylvania, nor maintained as any Divine opening, revelation, or necessary article of faith, but rather evaded from being publicly controverted; yet inas-

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much as there appears some ground of suspicion in the case, and as it seems to be favoured implicitly by some; therefore that we as a people may not be suspected about it, we sincerely declare our clearness from the said opinion, as really esteeming it not safe to propagate or maintain or trouble peoples' heads or minds with it; but that all should improve their present time and mercies. And we are the less concerned about the aforesaid queries and doctrine, because we find not any known person or persons of credible authority, that will adventure to assert that opinion, either as divinely revealed or opened, or as necessary to be believed or received as an article of faith, or that will undertake to demonstrate how many times or intervals of life they themselves have lived on earth, and what transactions or remarkable passages, or things good or bad, they have done or passed through in those their supposed past intervals of life.

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CONCLUSION.

To conclude: As we are persuaded want of walking in the true Light, and want of Christian charity is the great cause of divisions, in professed Christian societies of all sorts, and of this difference among a few persons in America, professing the same Light and Truth with us: we are ashamed of and surprized at the bitter language and severe consequences and treatment, in some of the printed books from one party, and the exposing of the weaknesses and unwarrantable expressions of some of the other, to the open enemies of both, and of religion itself; all which, as also to make any public rent in a religious Society on personal offences or private occasions, are greatly unbecoming our Christian profession, charity, or Society.

And we pray God rebuke and stop this troublesome spirit of enmity and division wherever it is; for it makes great disturbance and trouble in the creation, and where it enters in Church or state; yet its ill work is no new thing. It was the same spirit that infested and troubled the primitive Christian churches, causing divi-

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sions and offences contrary to the Gospel of peace, at first received, and whereby parties and schisms were made; and one said I am of Paul, another of Apollos, another of Cephas; which carnality the apostle reproved, as knowing and testifying that Christ, whom they all professed, is not divided. And if Christian tenderness and charity might influence all parties, we see no real cause for these few persons aforesaid to divide or separate outwardly, especially about doctrine, seeing both profess one Light, one Spirit, one God, and one Lord Jesus Christ, and faith in Him, and sincerely to believe the Holy Scriptures. And even the person charging the other in print, professes to "own the body of the people called Quakers, and seems to approve of our ancient, faithful, and generally approved Friends, writers or publishers of our doctrines and principles, and preachers among us generally owned and approved by us, as men of sound judgment and understanding, and as owning the fundamental articles of the Christian and Protestant faith." Thus far the person charging, in his "Serious Appeal," *page* 6. As also the same person further openly signified at the other Friends' meeting, that "he and his Friends had unity with the most there as to the main. As also with all faithful Friends every where, excepting only some in their

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meeting that were unsound," &c.—"*Reason and Causes*," *page* 26. And therefore if most on both sides have unity as to the main, we may charitably suppose they do not differ in the main or substance of Christian faith or doctrine before cited, and sincerely owned and confessed by us; if tenderly and duly considered by both sides, as men seeking peace, love, and concord. Wherefore the difference was very indiscreetly managed, aggravated, and exposed to separation, printing, and reproach, seeing it was not in the main.

We wholly dislike such rending and tearing, such dividing and aggravating proceedings, and bitter treatment, and have no unity therewith; but desire the Lord in mercy to repair the breaches, and heal the backslidings among them, and amongst all that are esteemed Christian professions and societies, and incline all to the main, to the True Light, to the substance and life of Christianity, to true love, fervent charity, and tender-heartedness, and forgiveness towards one another, and to follow peace with all men, and holiness; without which no man shall see the Lord.

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A POSTSCRIPT,

RELATING TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION AND ETERNAL JUDGMENT.

At the last trump of God, and voice of the archangel, the dead shall be raised incorruptible; the dead in Christ shall rise first, 1 *Cor.* xv. 52. 1 *Thes.* iv. 16, compared with *Mat.* xxiv. 31.

Many are often alarmed in conscience here by the Word and Voice of God, who stop their ears and slight those warnings; but the great and final alarm of the last trumpet, they cannot stop their ears against nor escape: it will unavoidably seize upon, and further awaken them finally to judgment. They that will not be alarmed in their consciences unto repentance, nor out of their sins here, must certainly be alarmed to judgment hereafter.

Whosoever do now wilfully shut their eyes, hate, contemn or shun the Light of Christ, or his appearance within, shall at last be made to see, and not be able to shun or hide themselves from his glorious and dreadful appearance from Heaven with his mighty angels, as with light-

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ning and in flaming fire, to render vengeance on all them that know not God and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 *Thes.* vii. 8. *Mat.* xxiv. 27. *Luke* xvii. 24. *Dan.* x. 6. *Job* xxxvii. 3.

And though many now evade and reject the inward convictions and judgment of the *Light*, and shut up the records or books thereof in their own consciences, they shall all be at last opened, and every one judged of these things recorded therein, according to their works, *Rev.* xx. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Signed in behalf of our Christian Profession and People aforesaid;

GEORGE WHITEHEAD,
AMBROSE RIGG,
WILLIAM FALLOWFIELD,
JAMES PARKE,
CHARLES MARSHALL,
JOHN BOWATER,
JOHN VAUGHTON,
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